

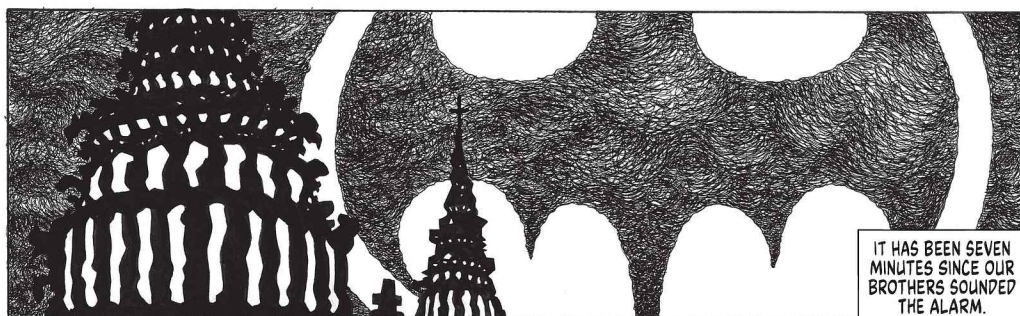




WEEKS

BATMAN BLACK & WHITE #5
MAIN COVER BY LEE WEEKS





IT HAS BEEN SEVEN
MINUTES SINCE OUR
BROTHERS SOUNDED
THE ALARM.



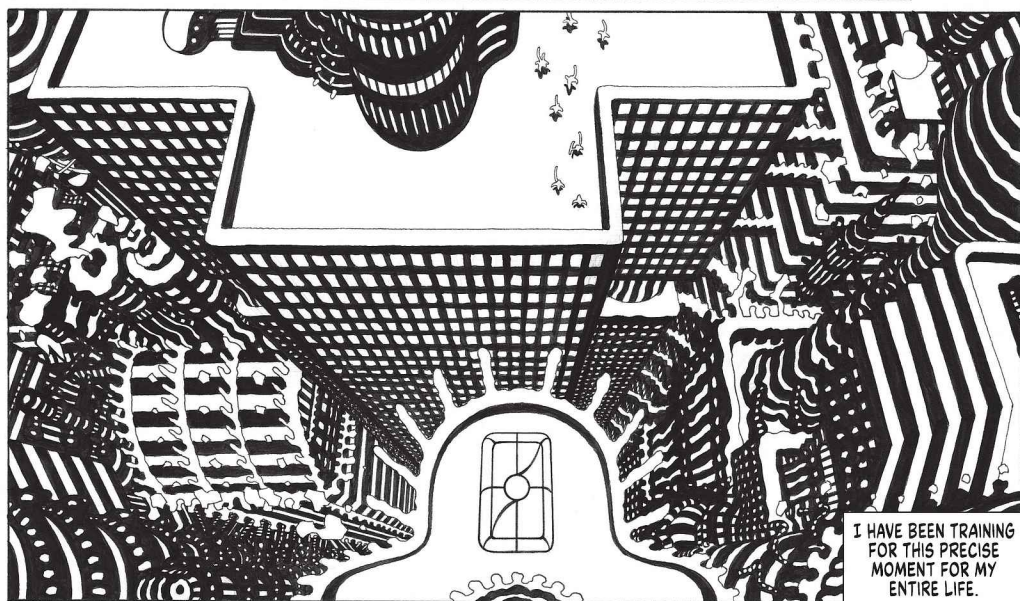
THE DETECTIVE SAW
THE ATTACK COMING,
AS HE ALWAYS DOES.



I DO NOT FEEL
MY FEET TOUCH
THE ROOFTOPS.

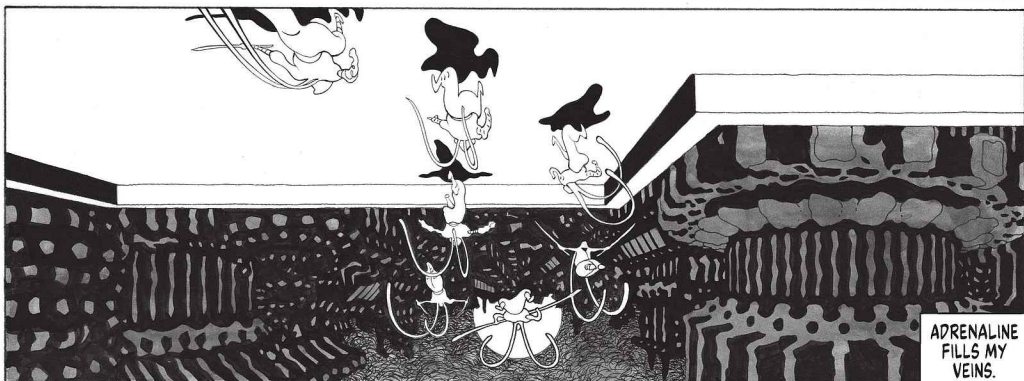


I AM RACING
TOWARD MY
DESTINY.

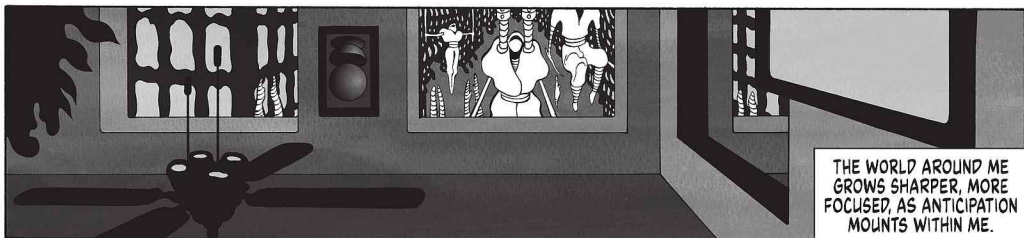


I HAVE BEEN TRAINING
FOR THIS PRECISE
MOMENT FOR MY
ENTIRE LIFE.

TIME SLOWS.

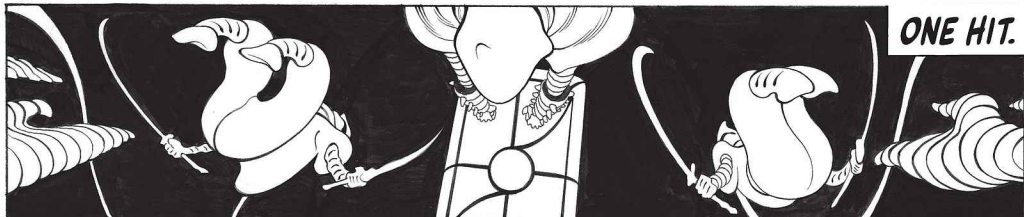
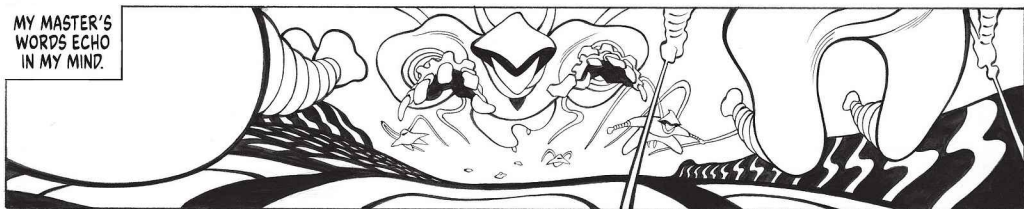


ADRENALINE
FILLS MY
VEINS.

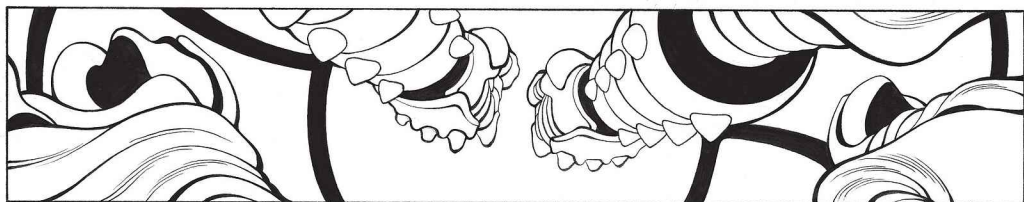


THE WORLD AROUND ME
GROWS SHARPER, MORE
FOCUSED, AS ANTICIPATION
MOUNTS WITHIN ME.

MY MASTER'S
WORDS ECHO
IN MY MIND.



ONE HIT.





ONE HIT IS ALL THAT MATTERS.



I HEAR THE FAMILIAR SOUND
OF FIST AGAINST FLESH, AND
IN IT I HEAR MY MASTER'S
VOICE ECHO AGAIN.

RA'S AL GHUL.
THE DEMON'S HEAD.

ONE MONTH AGO,
I WAS CALLED
BEFORE HIS
THRONE.

HE TOLD ME I HAD
BEEN SELECTED FOR A
MISSION AGAINST HIS
GREAT ADVERSARY.

HE REMINDED
ME OF MY
PLACE.

THAT I HAVE
NO NAME. THAT I
HAVE NO IDENTITY.

IN THIS MISSION, I
AM ACTING AS ONE
OF HIS APPENDAGES.

AND MY ONLY
JOB IS TO
LAND ONE HIT.

THE DETECTIVE
MOVES WITH
GRACE AND
PRECISION.

I WATCH HIM TAKE
BLOWS THAT WOULD
BE LETHAL, DELIVERED
AGAINST AN ORDINARY
MAN, BUT HE DOES
NOT FLINCH.

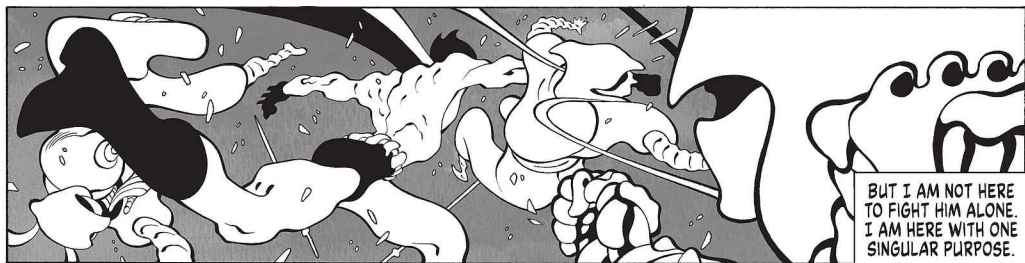
INSTEAD HE MOVES
WITH THE IMPACT,
TURNING IT AGAINST
ANOTHER OPPONENT.
AND ANOTHER.

I HAVE NEVER IN MY
LIFE SEEN SOMEONE
MOVE SO
BEAUTIFULLY.

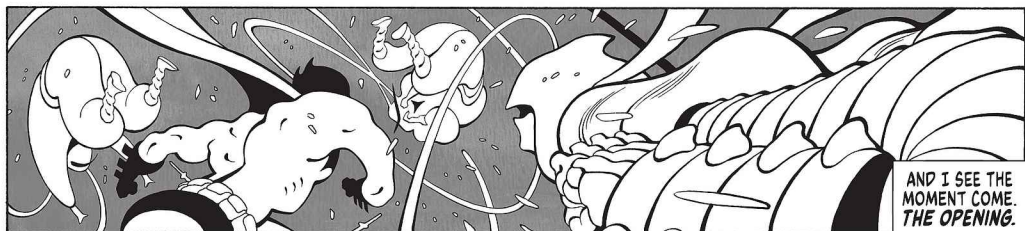




I AM DWARFED BY HIM. BY HIS SKILL. BY HIS GRACE. WERE I TO FACE HIM, ONE-ON-ONE, HE WOULD MAKE A FOOL OF ME.



BUT I AM NOT HERE TO FIGHT HIM ALONE. I AM HERE WITH ONE SINGULAR PURPOSE.



AND I SEE THE MOMENT COME. THE OPENING.



HE SEES IT COMING...



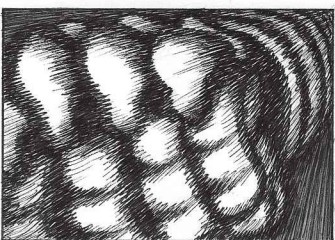
...TOO LATE...



...BUT AS HE TURNS...



...HIS EYES LOCK WITH MINE.



IN TIME FOR HIM TO UNDERSTAND.

IN THAT MOMENT, I AM NOT MYSELF.



IN THAT MOMENT, I AM
THE **DEMON'S FIST**,
UNLEASHING FURY UPON
MY GREAT ADVERSARY.


MY BLOW IS ONE OF
THOUSANDS, IN A FIGHT
THAT WILL LAST A
GENERATION.

WEARING HIM
DOWN, HIT BY
HIT, UNTIL HE
FINALLY
BREAKS.



THE MOMENT PASSES,
AND SO DOES THE
DETECTIVE.

AS
CONSCIOUSNESS
SLIPS FROM MY
BODY, I
SUCCUMB
TO PAIN AND
EXHAUSTION.



BUT I FEEL A GREAT
PEACE. AND I KNOW I
WILL DO ANYTHING IN MY
POWER TO FEEL THAT
PEACE IN ME AGAIN.



TO FEEL A PART OF
SOMETHING LARGER
THAN ANY OF US.

TO LAND
ONE HIT.

THE DEMON'S FIST

JAMES TYNION IV WRITER TRADD MOORE ARTIST
CLAYTON COWLES LETTERS BEN ABERNATHY & DAVE WIELGOSZ EDITORS

END



THERE IS ALWAYS AN UNKNOWN. WE FEAR IT.

BREEDING ANXIETY.

*I'M WAITING
INSIDE OF
IT.*

*GOTHAM HAS ALWAYS
FACED UNCERTAINTY AT
ONE TIME OR ANOTHER.*

*I HAVE, TOO, EVER
SINCE MY CHILDHOOD.*

*THERE HAVE BEEN SO
MANY STRUGGLES.*

*LIKE GOTHAM STRUGGLES
NOW: TRANQUIL STREETS
BELIE AN UNSEEN
THREAT.*

*TINY, DEADLY MONSTERS
STALK US, RIDING ON A
FRIENDLY SMILE, OR A
GENTLE TOUCH.*

*SO MANY
MONSTERS.*

*BUT THE
MONSTERS
I KNOW ARE
SOMETHING ELSE
ENTIRELY.*

GOTHAM
PURVEYOR OF FINE BOOKS
SERVES BY
H. WILLIAMS III
TODD KLEIN
ANDY KHOURI

BLAM

SOMETIMES I WONDER
IF THEY EXIST BECAUSE
I DO.

OLD
DEMONS
ALWAYS
HUNTING.

RELENTLESS.
EXHAUSTING.
I'M SO DAMN
TIRED.

I
THINK
WE ALL
ARE
NOW.

WE'VE
NEVER FACED
ANYTHING
QUITE
LIKE THIS
BEFORE.





IT'S
FACELESS.
IMPERSONAL.

BUT LIKE
ANY OTHER
VILLAIN...

...IT TAKES
ADVANTAGE OF
THOSE MOST
VULNERABLE.

AND
I FEEL
POWERLESS
AGAINST
IT...

...MAYBE
THE MOST
SINCE BEING
FROZEN BY
MY MOTHER'S
FALLING
PEARLS.

WHO?
WHAT?
WHERE?
WHY?

WHEN?
DING

TICK
TOCK...



THAT'S
THE THING
I REMEMBER
SO PROFOUNDLY
FROM THAT
NIGHT.

NOT
THE
BLOOD.

NOT
THE
DEATH.

ONLY
SCATTERED
PEARLS IN
TIMELESS
SLOW
MOTION.



I HATE
THAT. I
RESENT BEING
POWERLESS.

I'VE
FOUGHT MY
ENTIRE LIFE IN
REJECTION OF
BEING THAT
POWERLESS
LITTLE
BOY.

I'M
NOT EVEN
SURE I KNOW
WHO I AM
WITHOUT
THAT.



THE
ONLY
FIGHT
I HAVE
NOW...

HOW
MANY?
PICK A
CARD!

ANY
CARD!
WHICH
ONE AM
I?

...IS
WRESTLING
WITH GHOSTS OF
MADNESS...

JUNE 12, 18 - 19, 2010



...HAUNTING ME...

...LIKE A FEVER DREAM.

BECAUSE THIS NEW ENEMY CAN'T BE PUT DOWN WITH A FIST OR A BOOT.

THIS TIME IT'S OTHERS WHO FIGHT FOR US IN WAYS I CANNOT.

I SALUTE THEM, AND I WAIT. SOMETHING ELSE WILL COME. IT'S INEVITABLE. THE VILLAINS I KNOW... THAT I'VE FACED ENDLESSLY, YEAR AFTER YEAR... THEY'LL **USE** THIS. THEY'LL PLOT. IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.

IT ALWAYS IS.

A black and white comic book illustration of Batman. He is shown from the waist up, wearing his iconic suit and cowl. He is holding a long, flowing cape that billows out behind him. His right hand is raised to his face, with his fingers spread. The background features a city skyline with various buildings and a large, dark, spire-like structure on the right. The sky is filled with clouds and several small, circular, sun-like symbols. The overall tone is dramatic and heroic.

AND I'LL BE HERE
TO GREET THEM.

STOP THEM FROM
ADDING TO
GOTHAM'S MISERY.

NO MATTER
HOW OLD AND
TIRED I AM...

...I'LL ALWAYS
BE HERE.

IT'S THE LEAST
I CAN DO.

I DIDN'T THINK TWICE ABOUT THROWING
THE DUMMY UNDER THE TRAIN. I HAD TO BREAK
THE VENTRILOQUIST FREE OF ITS CONTROL.



THREE WEEKS SPENT CHASING
THAT MADMAN, BOTH MY SYMPATHY
AND MY PATIENCE ARE AT AN END.

TIRED, ACHING, EVERY MUSCLE
IN MY BODY SHRIEKING LIKE
THOSE BATS.

STILL, WESKER'S SCREAMS WHEN HE SAW
SCARFACE IN PIECES...LIKE A LOST CHILD.
WELL, THAT'S FOR HIS DOCTORS TO DEAL WITH.



FIRST FLIGHT

PAUL DINI *Writer* • ANDY KUBERT *Artist* • ROB LEIGH *Letters* • BEN ABERNATHY & DAVE WIELGOSZ *Editors*

BATS...



SKREEEE!



SHOULD HAVE
NOTICED THE
BATS WERE
FRIGHTENED.



THERE'S THE
CAUSE.

IS IT
ALONE
OR...



NO, OF
COURSE
NOT.



NINJA MAN-BATS ALWAYS
ATTACK IN SWARMS.



BUT WHY HERE?
WHY NOW?

FIRST THINGS FIRST. THESE
HYBRIDS WERE CREATED
BY TALIA AL GHUL TO
BE THE ELVING
EXECUTIONERS FOR
THE LEAGUE OF
ASSASSINS.



I HAVE TO
TAKE THE
FIGHT OUT
OF THEM...

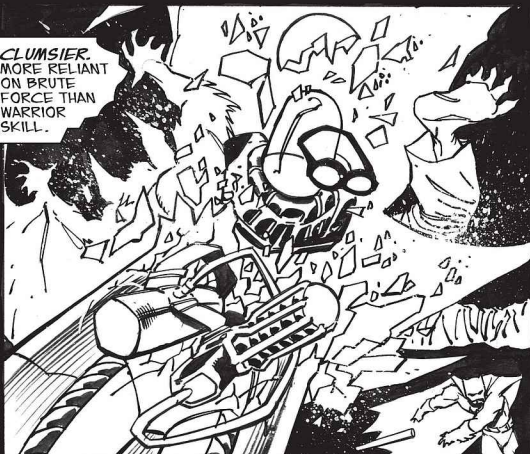
IF THAT'S
EVEN
POSSIBLE.



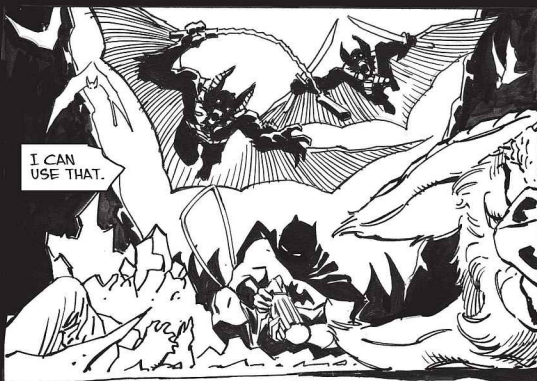
THEIR ATTACK STRATEGY
IS MORE RANDOM THAN
I REMEMBERED.



CLUMSIER
MORE RELIANT
ON BRUTE
FORCE THAN
WARRIOR
SKILL.



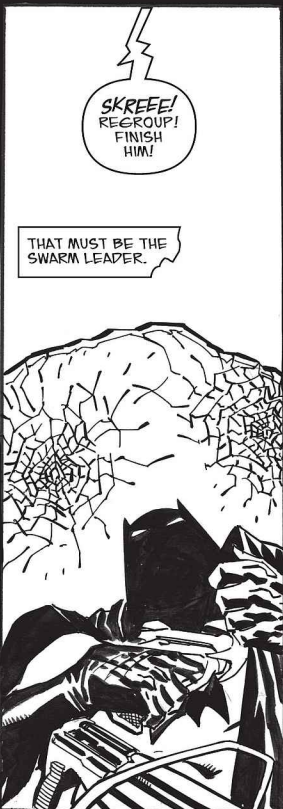
I CAN
USE THAT.



LIKE FLIES ON
A WINDSHIELD.

SKREEE!
REGROUP!
FINISH
HIM!

THAT MUST BE THE
SWARM LEADER.



IF ANYONE KNOWS THE
REASON FOR THIS
ATTACK, IT'S HIM.

SKREEEE!



HE'S NOT BEING
COOPERATIVE.



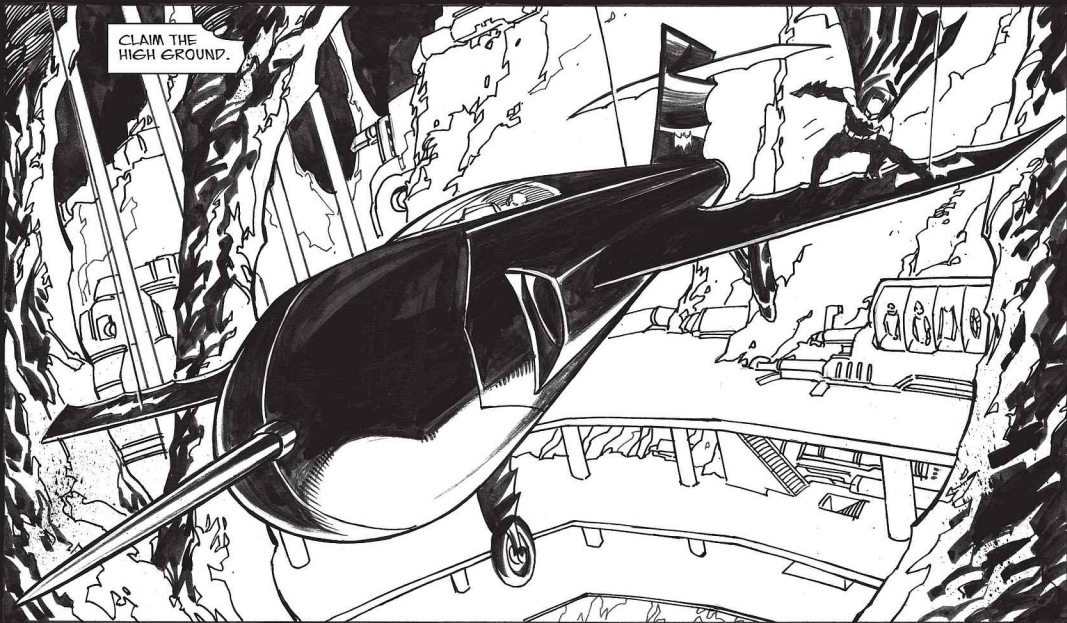
THE IMPROMPTU
ASSISTANCE
FROM HIS LITTLE
"COUSINS" ISN'T
HELPING, EITHER.



BETTER TAKE
THIS FIGHT TO
MY LEVEL.



CLAIM THE
HIGH GROUND.



AND BRACE
MYSELF FOR
FURTHER
SURPRISES.



MASTER
BRUCE!

I'M SO SORRY!
THEY INVADDED THE
CAVE BEFORE I COULD
WARN YOU!



ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?

FOR
THE MOMENT!
PLEASE! BE
CAREFUL!



SKREEE!
WE HAVE COME
TO FULFILL OUR
PURPOSE!



YOUR DEATH
WILL GRANT US
OUR DESTINY!

LOOK
OUT!



WHAT DOES THE LEAGUE OF ASSASSINS HAVE TO GAIN FROM MY DEATH?



ESPECIALLY BY SUCH HAPHAZARD MEANS? THIS CAN'T BE ABOUT SETTLING OLD SCORES.



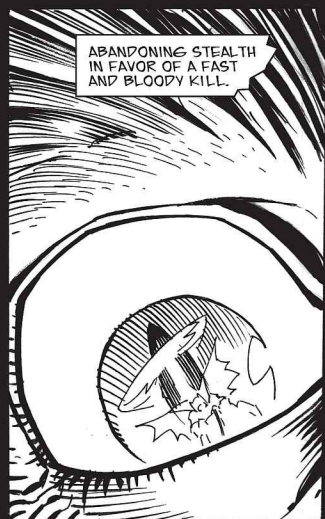
THESE CREATURES CAN KILL...



BUT NOT WITH THE PRECISION OF THE ONES I FIRST MET UNDER TALIA'S COMMAND.



THESE ARE MORE BRAWLERS THAN NINJAS...



ABANDONING STEALTH IN FAVOR OF A FAST AND BLOODY KILL.



NOT THAT I INTEND TO MAKE IT EASY FOR THEM.

I STRONGLY SUSPECTED I'D
MEET THESE CREATURES AGAIN.

NOT ON MY HOME GROUND
PERHAPS, BUT I PREPARED
FOR EVERY OTHER
EVENTUALITY.



NET ROCKETS,
TO TAKE THEM
ALIVE.



SKRREE!

YEEEK!



HIGH-FREQUENCY
SCRAMBLERS...



...SPECIFICALLY
DESIGNED TO
DISRUPT THEIR
RADAR.



NO!
SKRREE!
WE'VE
TRAINED TOO
HARD!

OUR SURVIVAL
DEPENDS ON YOUR
DESTRUCTION!





WE
ARE MANY!
WE WILL
PROTECT ALL
THAT YOU
CANNOT!



AT
LAST OUR
EXISTENCE
WILL HAVE
MEANING!



MY
APOLOGIES,
BELOVED.
IT WAS NEVER
MY INTENTION
FOR THIS TO
HAPPEN.

TALIA.

THESE
RENEGADES WERE
MY FIRST ATTEMPT
AT CREATING
NINJA MAN-BAT
GUARDIANS.

THEY WERE
SIMPLE COMPARED
TO THE LATER
GENERATIONS.
STILL, I WAS QUITE
FOND OF MY
"FIRST FLIGHT."

I HAD THEM
SEQUESTERED
IN A VAST AVIARY
WHERE THEY
COULD LIVE
THEIR LIVES IN
PEACE.

YET, THE URGE
TO OBEY THEIR
IMPLANTED INSTINCTS,
TO BE *PROTECTORS*,
GREW EVER STRONGER
INSIDE THEM. THEY DESIRED
MORE THAN TO SIMPLY
EXIST.



THEY LONGED
FOR A PLACE THEY
COULD CALL HOME,
WITH BEINGS THEY
COULD SERVE AND
DEFEND.

AND THEY
CAME TO BELIEVE
THAT IF GOTHAM
LOST ITS CURRENT
"NINJA BAT"
GUARDIAN, THEY
COULD ASSUME
HIS ROLE.

THERE IS A
CRUDE LOGIC
TO IT, THOUGH OF
COURSE I WILDLY
DISAGREED
WITH THEIR
METHODS.





I BELIEVE
YOU, TALIA. MY
NEXT QUESTION.
CAN THEY BE
RETRAINED?



GIVEN TIME,
AND STRONG GUIDANCE
FROM A FEARLESS
PERSON THEY COULD
RESPECT. DO YOU
INTEND TO...?



NO.
BUT I HAVE
A FRIEND WHO
MIGHT BE
WILLING.

I'LL
CONTACT HIM.
AFTER WE
HELP ALFRED,
OF COURSE.

MUCH
APPRECIATED,
SIR!

"BATMAN, YOU AND TALIA WILL
BE PLEASED TO KNOW THE
MAN-BATS HAVE COMPLETELY
ADAPTED TO THEIR NEW HOME.

"THEY LOVE THE RAINFOREST
AS MUCH AS I DO AND MAKE
ADMIRABLE PROTECTORS.



"TRUE, THEY DID NEED TO
MASTER *LESS LETHAL* MEANS
OF DISPATCHING INTRUDERS...



"BUT THEY HAVE PROVEN TO BE
FAST LEARNERS, AND UNDER MY
DIRECTION, CASUALTIES
CONTINUE TO BE...*MINIMIZED*."

"THANK YOU AGAIN FOR
SENDING THEM MY WAY."



"I THINK THIS IS THE
BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL
PARTNERSHIP."

END

The Interval.

*My body hurts. My brain
struggles, driven by nausea...*

*...eager to throw up all
over these liquid
shadows.*

*They rip my insides,
pulling them through
my mouth
to invert me.*

*To merge with me.
To drink this...*

SISYPHUS

EMMA RIOS Writer & Artist

STEVE WANDS Letterer

DAVE WIELGOSZ Editor

*Decrepit
and wounded.*

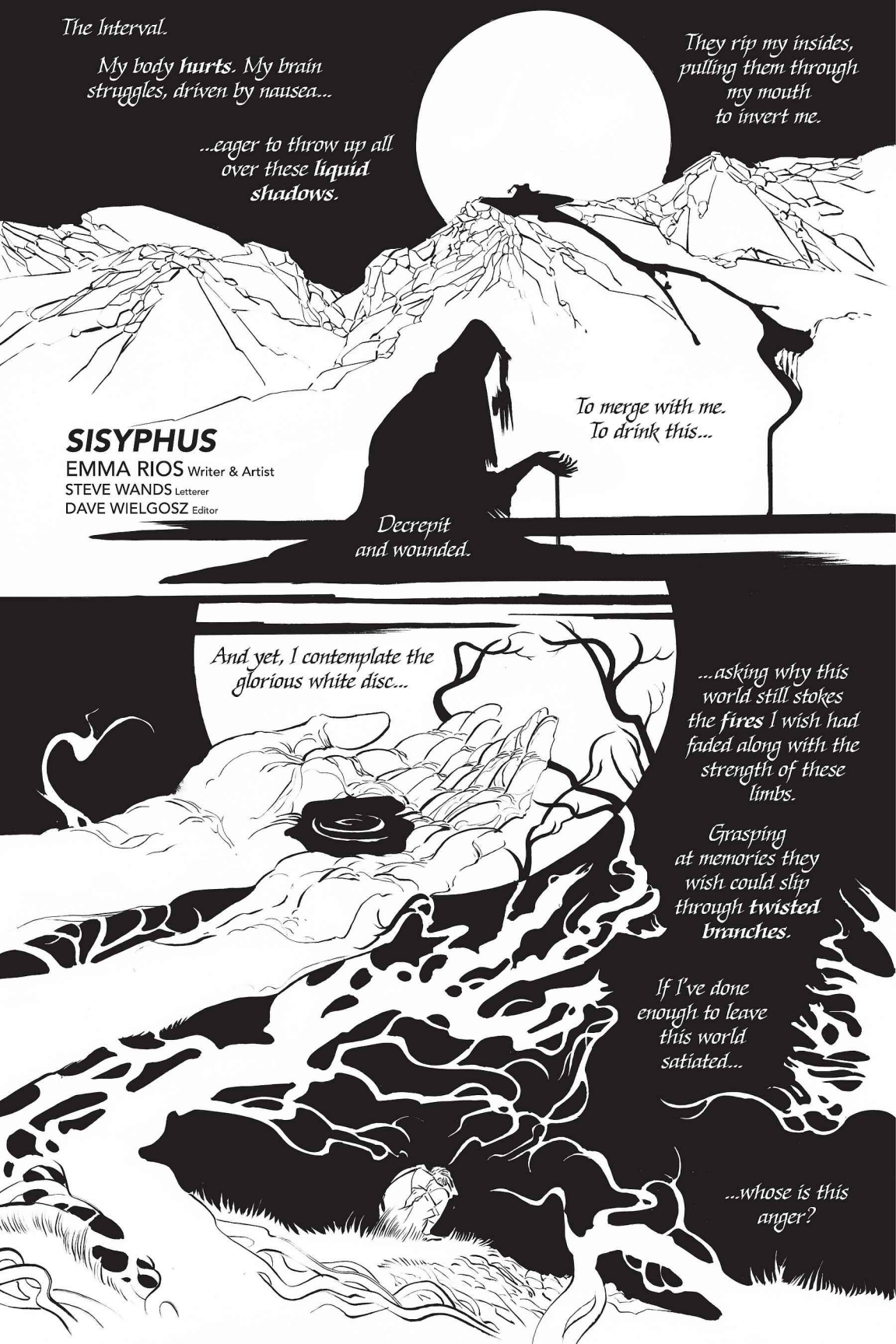
*And yet, I contemplate the
glorious white disc...*

*...asking why this
world still stokes
the fires I wish had
faded along with the
strength of these
limbs.*

*Grasping
at memories they
wish could slip
through twisted
branches.*

*If I've done
enough to leave
this world
satiated...*

*...whose is this
anger?*



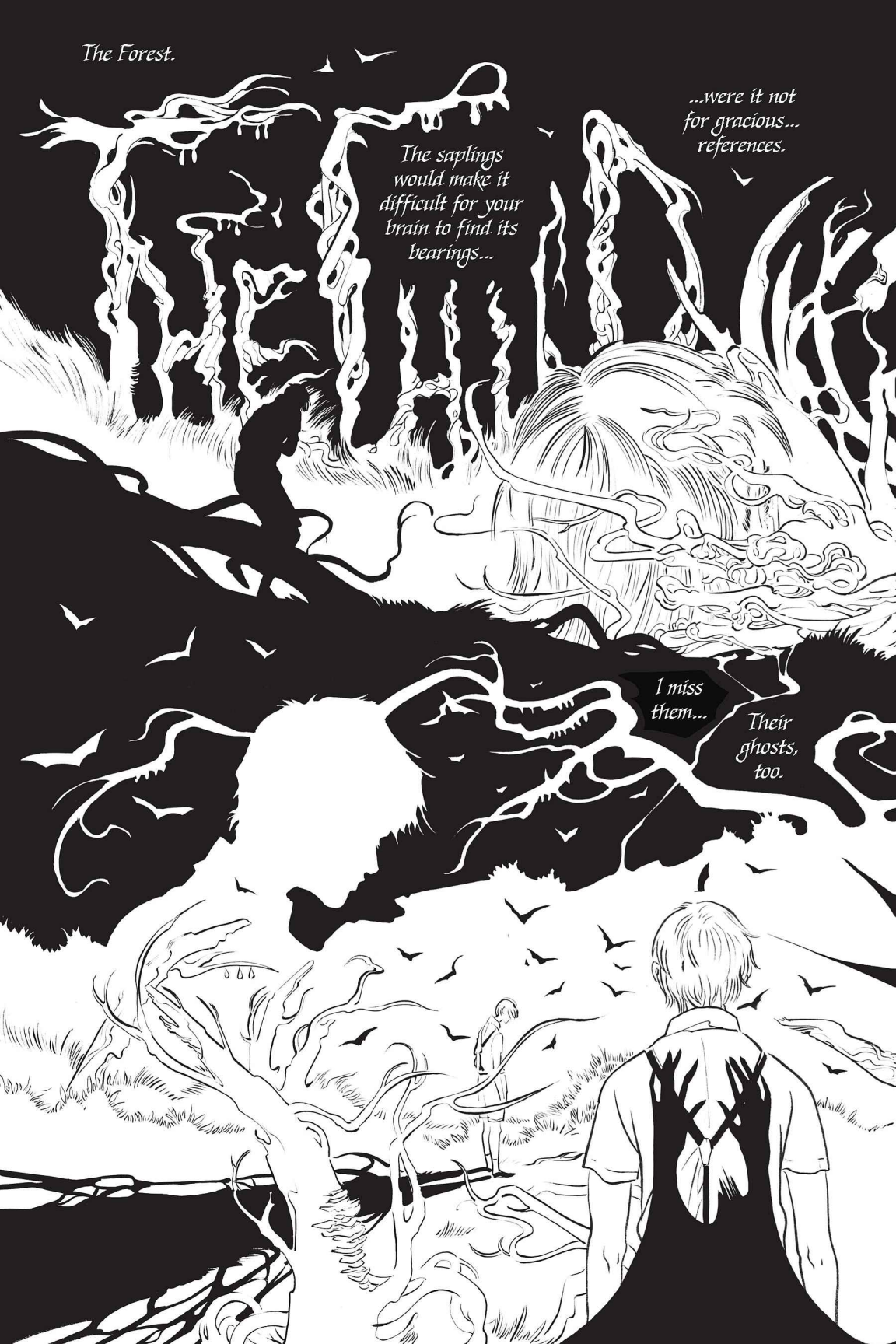
The Forest.

*The saplings
would make it
difficult for your
brain to find its
bearings...*

*...were it not
for gracious...
references.*

*I miss
them...*

*Their
ghosts,
too.*





*This is me.
Rotting.*

*My wrinkles
are gone, but so
is my spine.*

*I'm the pieces
left behind in
the pool of
their blood.*

*The grief. The
mourning. The
not-a-corpse.*

*I need the
lost stuck to
myself.*

*May
it take
its toll.*

*I'll walk these
bones so others don't
meet themselves
rotting.*

The Stream.

*Beaked and
clawed imps
come!*

*Find me-solid,
dancing in the
current amidst
slippery rocks.*

*A liar soiled
by enmity
aroused...*

*Grazed at by
the flames.*



*...unaware of
his course yet
aware of every
prey.*

*Your howling
makes amends to
what's left of
my...*

...integrity.

Demons...

*Aren't we
all?*

The Pit.

*Its abyssal
entrails kindly
endorse the
uncanny.*

*A human hand
prevails.*



*Testament to my
vulnerability in
the world where I
was first born.*

*The opposite
bestows upon
me delicate
membranes.*

*A brand
nonetheless,
the unique
acknowled-
ment of an
identity still
uncertain...*

*...seemingly
granted by the
amniotic sea.*

*A reborn me in the
dawn of its existence...*

*...has been deprived of the
shelter of not needing.*



*I sprout back in the in-between, nourished
by the gastric shadows.*

*My skin
folds under
unparalleled
gravity.*

*Every new line traced is but another
path to the starting point.*

It never ends.

*"So others
don't..."*

*The old man puts
his mantle over my
shoulders.*

*The
membrane
entitles
me.*

The City.

*I have my
wings.*

End

Writer
G. WILLOW WILSON

Artist
GREG SMALL WOOD

Letterer
CLEM ROBINS

Editor
DAVE WIELGOSZ

METAMORPHOSIS



THEY SAY
HE'S IN THERE
WITH A **DEAD**
COP AND ONE
KIDNAPPED
GIRL.

NO MOVEMENT.
NO **NOISE.**

I THINK--I
ALWAYS THINK--
MAYBE THIS IS
GOING TO BE
THE TIME I GET
THERE **TOO**
LATE.

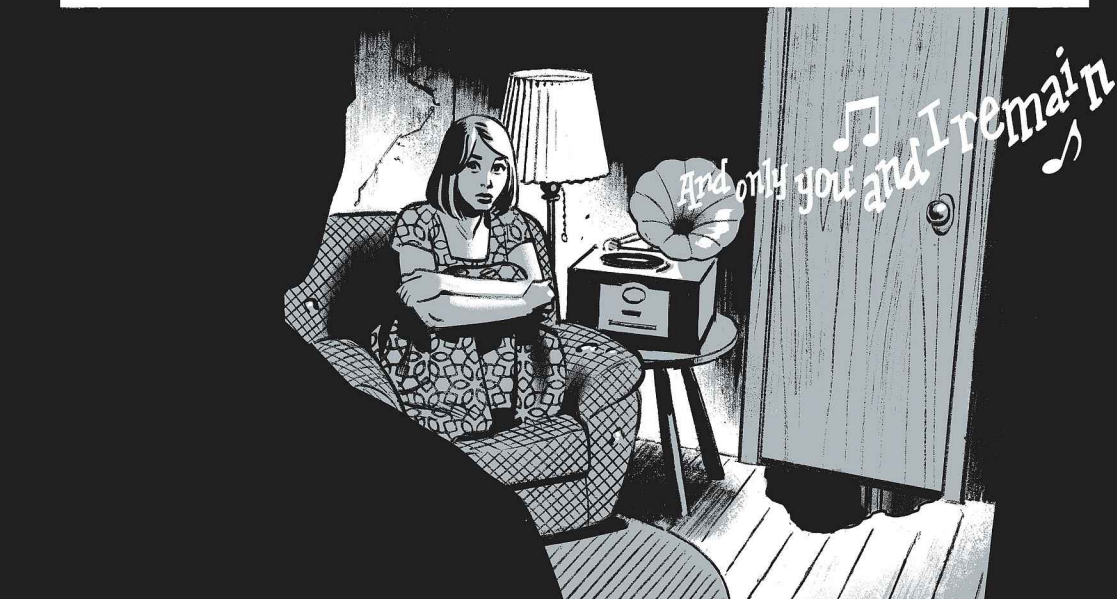
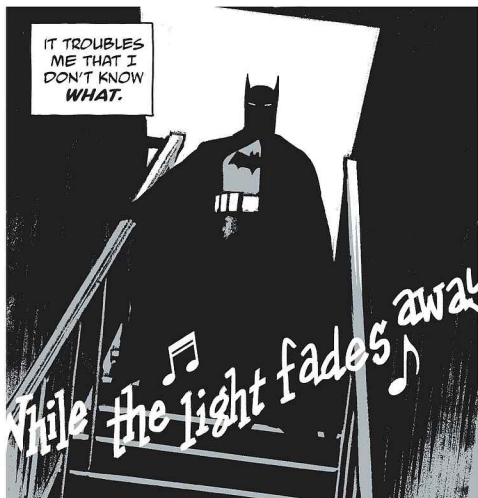
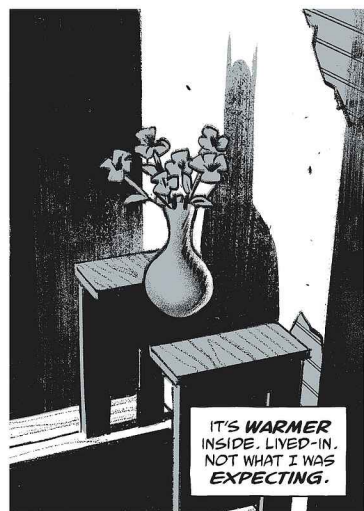


IT TAKES
TIME TO
WORK IN
DARKNESS.



SLOW IS
SMOOTH,
SMOOTH
IS FAST.

BUT
SOMETIMES
NOT FAST
ENOUGH.





MELANIE?
DIDJA SAY SOMETHING?

Oh I want to linger with you...





YOU.



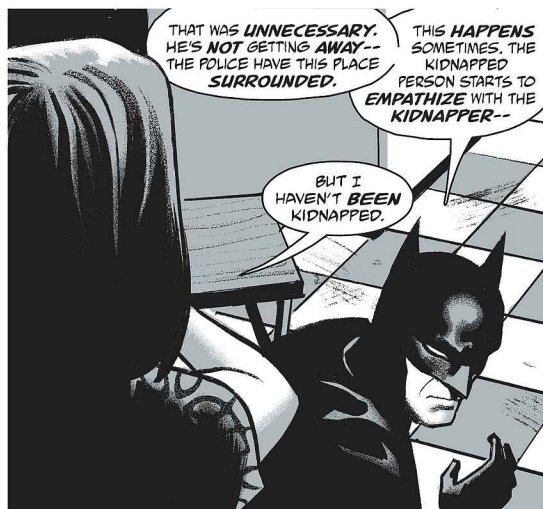
IT'S
ALWAYS
YOU!



ENOUGH,
WAYLON. YOU
AND I BOTH KNOW
HOW THIS **ENDS**.
HOW IT **ALWAYS**
ENDS.

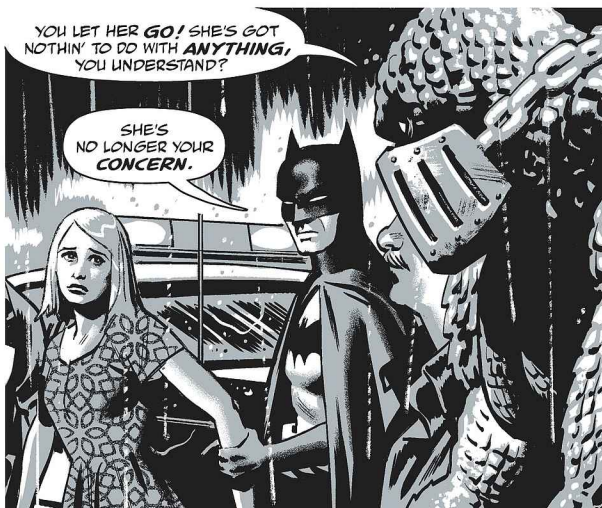








...MELANIE?



YOU LET HER GO! SHE'S GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH ANYTHING, YOU UNDERSTAND?

SHE'S NO LONGER YOUR CONCERN.



MY CONCERN? MY CONCERN?!

YOU GET TO TAKE OFF YOUR COWL AT THE END OF THE DAY AND BE A MAN!

WHAT DO I GET? HUH? WHAT DO I GET?!



WAYLON! LISTEN TO ME! IT WASN'T THE MAN I LIKED!

IT WAS THE BEAST!

OKAY, LADY. LET'S TAKE IT DOWN A NOTCH.



HE GETS THE FIRST PART RIGHT.

I CAN TAKE OFF THE COWL..



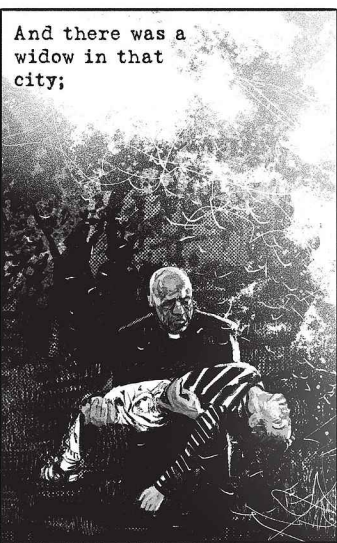
HE'S WRONG ABOUT THE SECOND PART, THOUGH.

HE'S WRONG ABOUT WHAT LIES UNDERNEATH.

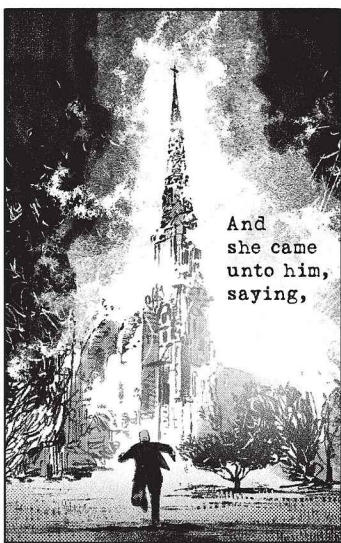
END

There was in a city a
judge, which feared
not God, neither
regarded man.

And there was a
widow in that
city;



And
she came
unto him,
saying,



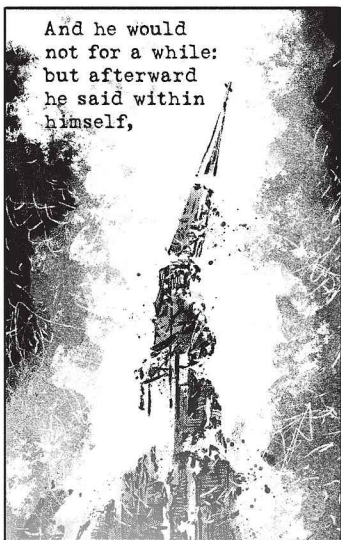
"Avenge me of
mine adversary!"



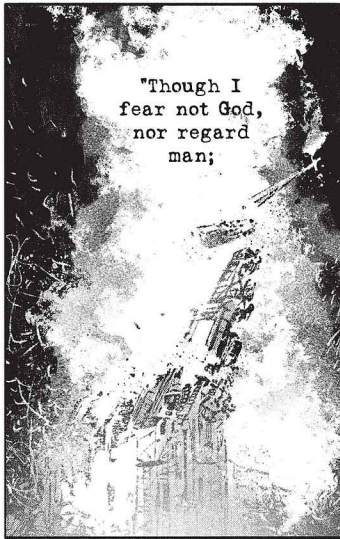
The Unjust Judge

TOM KING	...Writer
MITCH GERADS	...Artist
CLAYTON COWLES	...Letterer
ANDY KHOURI	...Editor

And he would
not for a while:
but afterward
he said within
himself,



"Though I
fear not God,
nor regard
man;



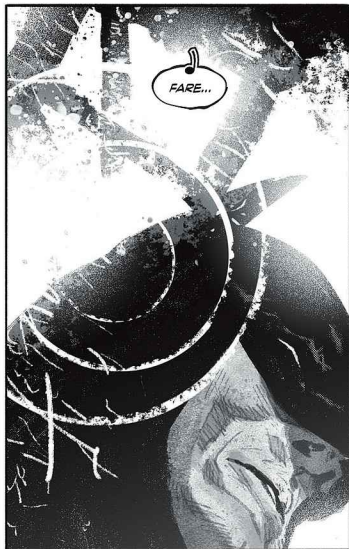
"Yet
because
this widow
troubleth
me, I will
avenge
her,



"Lest by her
continual coming
she weary me."







FARE...



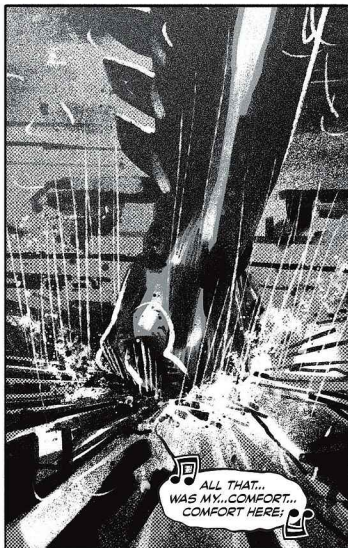
FARE YE
WELL...AFFECTIONS
VAIN.



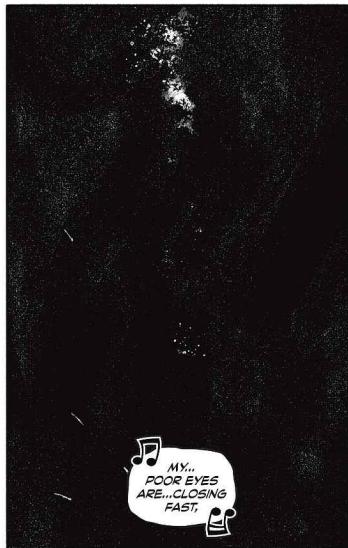
FULL OF...
PLEASURE, FULL...
OF PAIN;



HOME AND...
FRIENDS AND...
KINDRED...KINDRED
DEAR,



ALL THAT...
WAS MY...COMFORT...
COMFORT HERE;



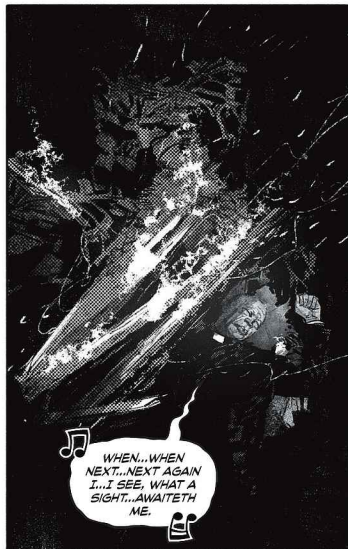
MY...
POOR EYES
ARE...CLOSING
FAST;



NOW I
LOOK...I LOOK...
ON YOU...MY...
MY LAST...



DIMMER
GROWS...THE...
THE LIGHT...NOW
IT'S...THICK...
DESCENDING
NIGHT.



WHEN...WHEN
NEXT...NEXT AGAIN
I...I SEE, WHAT A
SIGHT...AWAITETH
ME.





NO.

IT'S...
YOU'VE...YOU'RE...
VERY HURT,
FATHER...I...

I DON'T
KNOW IF I CAN
MOVE YOU,
FATHER.



ARE THE
CHILDREN...
THERE WAS A...
ARE ALL THE
CHILDREN...



THE
CHILDREN GOT
OUT. I TRIED TO
TELL YOU BEFORE
YOU CAME
BACK IN.



I GOT
THEM...



GOOD...
GOOD...THANK
YOU...



FATHER, I CAN'T
TREAT THESE
WOUNDS HERE. I
DON'T HAVE THE
EQUIPMENT.

IF I LEAVE
YOU, I CAN **COME
BACK**. IT'S POSSIBLE
THE BLEEDING HASN'T
SPREAD.

IT'S...IT'S
POSSIBLE...I...
IT WON'T TAKE...LONG.



NO, NO,
NO, PLEASE.
STAY.

THE LIGHT
IS DIM AND...AND...
FALLING...



AND I DO
NOT WANT TO
BE ALONE IN
THE DARK.





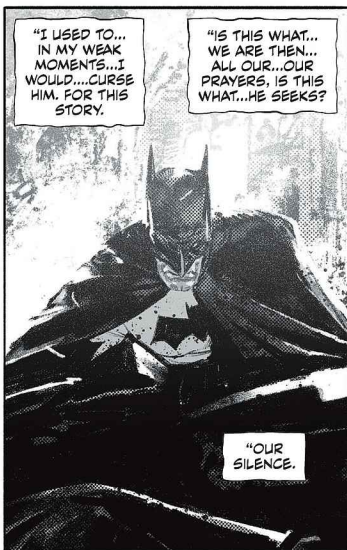
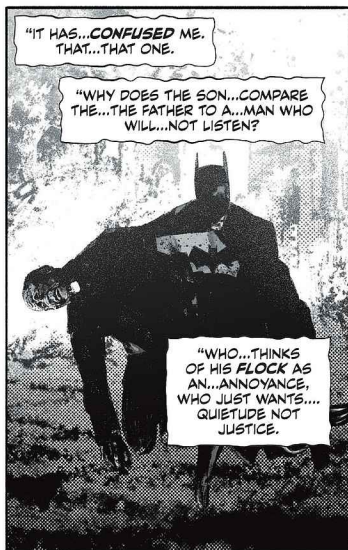
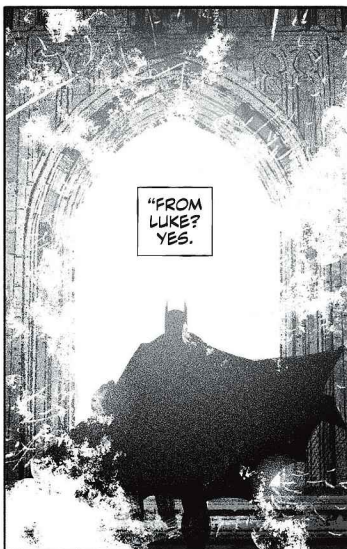
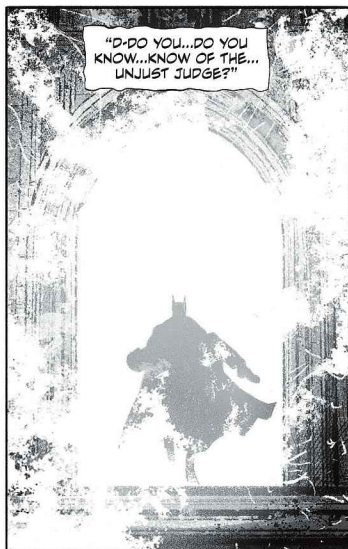
YOU
CANNOT
SAVE...ME...YOU
CANNOT SAVE...
ANYONE
FROM...

BUT...WHEN...
WHEN I WAS...
AFRAID...

YOU HELD...
YOU HELD MY HAND...
MY SON.

THAT...THAT
IS NOT F-FAILURE...
THAT IS...

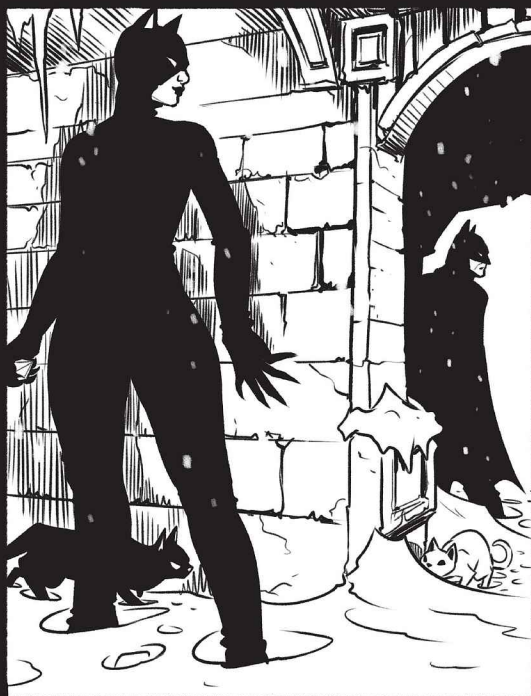
...ENOUGH.

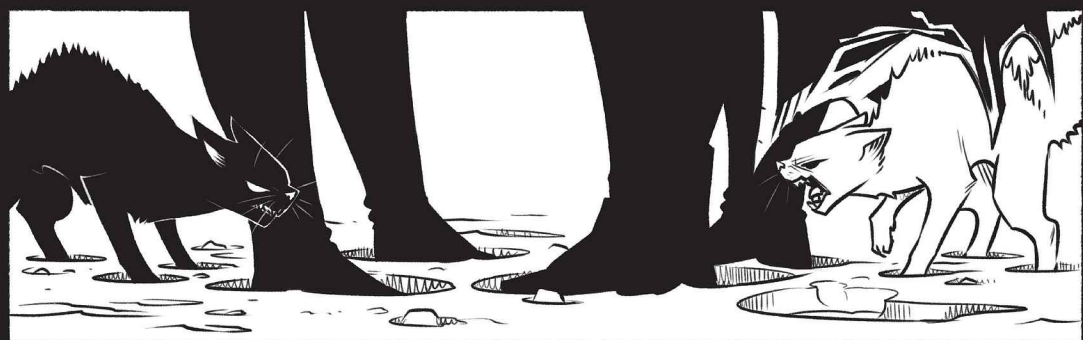


ALL CATS ARE GREY

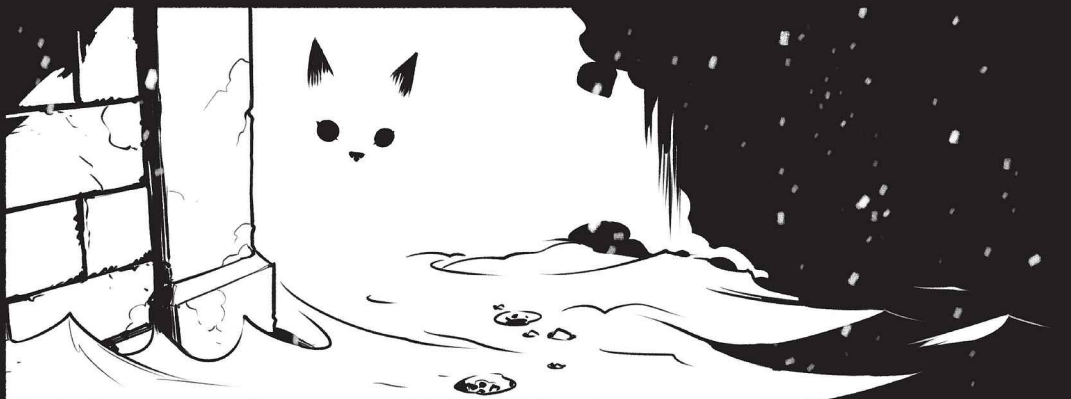
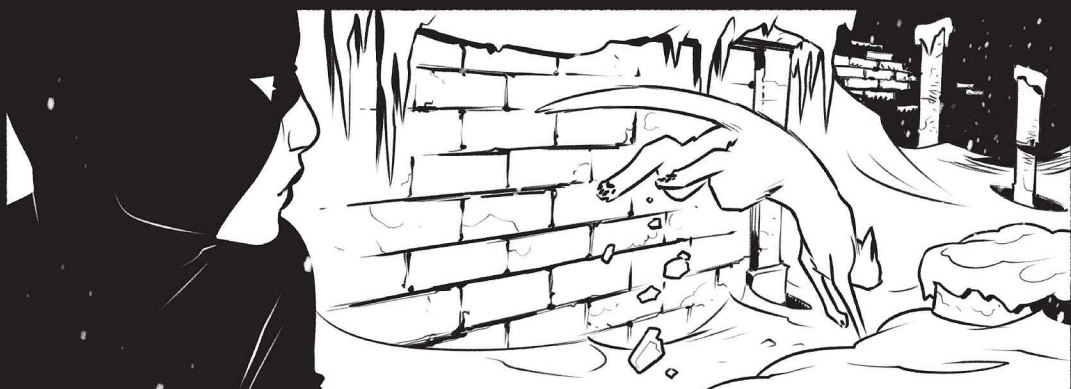
SOPHIE CAMPBELL • WRITER & ARTIST
BEN ABERNATHY & DAVE WIELGOSZ • EDITORS













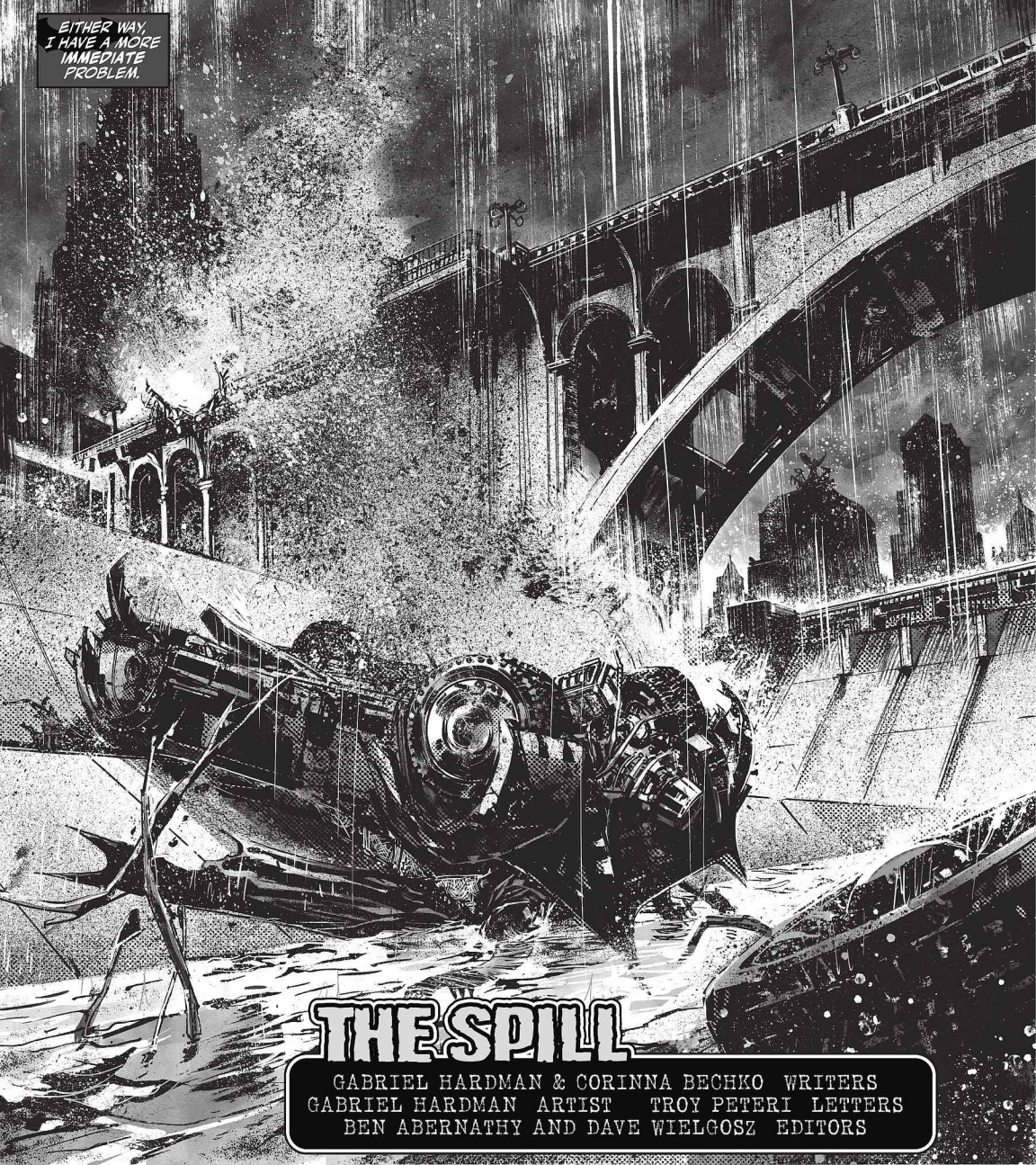




THE
END.



EITHER WAY,
I HAVE A MORE
IMMEDIATE
PROBLEM.



THE SPILL

GABRIEL HARDMAN & CORINNA BECHKO WRITERS
GABRIEL HARDMAN ARTIST TROY PETERI LETTERS
BEN ABERNATHY AND DAVE WIELGOSZ EDITORS



BUT JUDGING BY HOW MUCH THE WATER RUNOFF HAS RISEN, IT COULD HAVE BEEN AS LONG AS AN HOUR.

THE REBREATHER AND MOST EVERYTHING ELSE ON MY BELT IS PINNED OUT OF REACH. OR POSSIBLY CRUSHED.

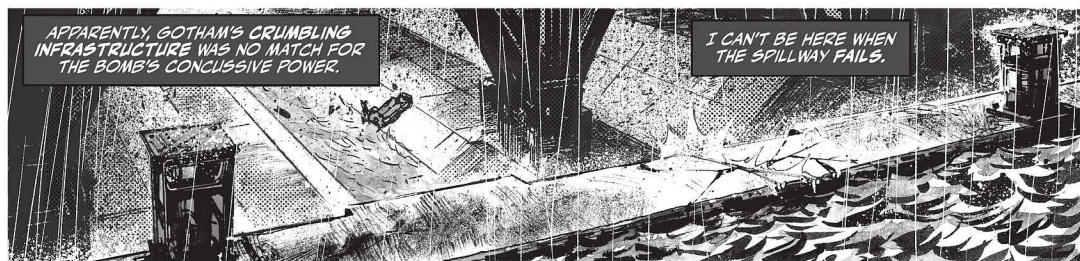
BUT MAYBE...



IF I CAN SNAG THE TOP OF THE CONTAINMENT WALL, THE GUN'S WINCH MIGHT LIFT THE BATMOBILE ENOUGH TO FREE ME.

APPARENTLY, GOTHAM'S CRUMBLING INFRASTRUCTURE WAS NO MATCH FOR THE BOMB'S CONCUSSIVE POWER.

I CAN'T BE HERE WHEN THE SPILLWAY FAILS.

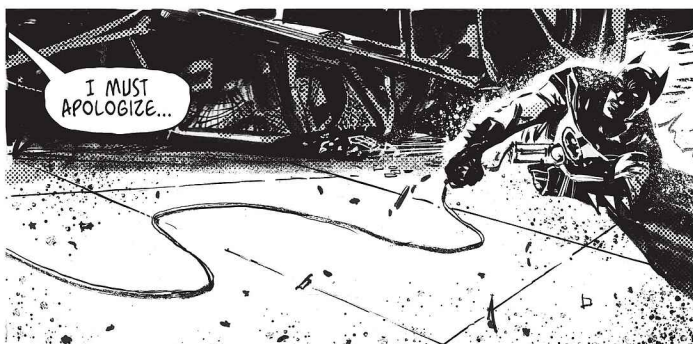


AND FAILURE IS IMMINENT.

FFSHHHH



I MUST APOLOGIZE...





...BUT
THIS IS JUST
TOO GOOD.

I CAN'T LET
THE SHOW END
SO QUICKLY,
BATMAN.

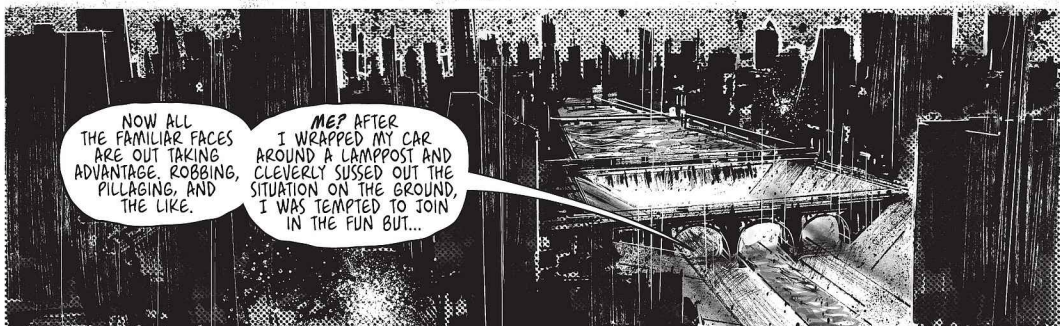
YOU
DID THIS? THE
E.M.P.?

YOU FRIED THE
ELECTRONICS IN
THE ENTIRE CITY
JUST TO GET
TO ME?

OH, IT'S
NOT THE
WHOLE CITY,
JUST...WELL,
MOST OF
IT.

BUT I DIDN'T DO
THIS. COME ON, AN
ELECTROMAGNETIC
PULSE BOMB?
SO...
STERILE.

NO. FROM WHAT I HEAR THIS WAS SOME BORING
PARAMILITARY NUTJOB. EXACTLY THE KIND OF GUY
YOU COULD TAKE DOWN IN A HEARTBEAT IF
YOU WEREN'T...WELL, YOU KNOW.



NOW ALL
THE FAMILIAR FACES
ARE OUT TAKING
ADVANTAGE. ROBBING,
PILLAGING, AND
THE LIKE.

ME? AFTER
I WRAPPED MY CAR
AROUND A LAMPPOST AND
CLEVERLY SUSSSED OUT THE
SITUATION ON THE GROUND,
I WAS TEMPTED TO JOIN
IN THE FUN BUT...



I JUST THOUGHT IT WOULD BE SO MUCH MORE REWARDING TO COME BACK AND WATCH YOU SLOWLY DROWN.

UUUGH!!



THINK THAT'S GONNA WORK?

COME A LITTLE CLOSER AND WE'LL FIND OUT TOGETHER.



WHAT, AND BOTH DIE?!

I HAVE TO ADMIT, THAT'S A ROMANTIC GESTURE, LIKE THE TRAGIC END OF AN EPIC POEM OR--



NAH. I SAY YOU DIE, I WATCH.



AFTER ALL, IT'S NOT LIKE--

JOKER! SHUT UP AND LISTEN.



THAT SPILLWAY IS ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE. IF WE WORK TOGETHER, WE CAN BOTH GET OUT OF HERE ALIVE.





NOT OPTIMAL.
BUT MAYBE...





I HAVE A LONG NIGHT AHEAD OF ME. A LOT OF FIRES TO PUT OUT. BUT I REEL HIM IN ANYWAY.



BETTER TO KEEP HIM CLOSE.

COUGH! COUGH!

YOU OWE ME!

WHAT? I SAVED YOUR LIFE!



YOU OWE ME GETTING TO WATCH YOU DIE!

END



I will unfold
the events...



...I will think
back to that
night...

...and I will allow
myself no illusions.
Not this time.



Smoke rose from the
streets of Gotham.

I searched the
skies for the man
responsible.

I searched for
the White Bat!



Who was he,
this pale white
impostor...?

He was
something
strange.



He had my face...
Bruce Wayne's face.

What haunted
me most were
his eyes.

Just like mine...
except soulless...
white on white.



Suddenly,
he was there,
mirroring me—

—my inverted
reflection—

—my photo
negative—

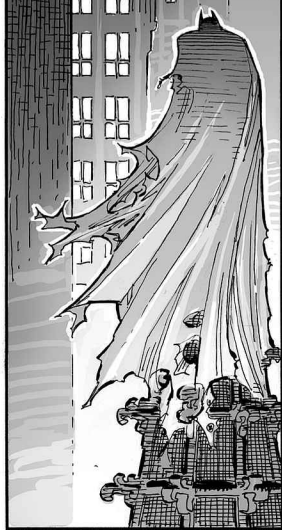
—a spectral
doppelgänger.

BATMAN:
DUAL
by DUSTIN WEAVER
TODD KLEIN: ANDY KHOURI:
letters editor



The White Bat had first appeared only six nights before that.

He looked and acted like me...



...but night by night his violence escalated.

He beat petty criminals to death.



Soon he began attacking people in their homes.



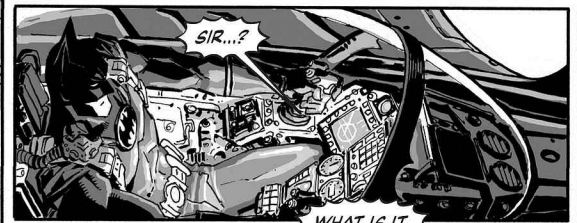
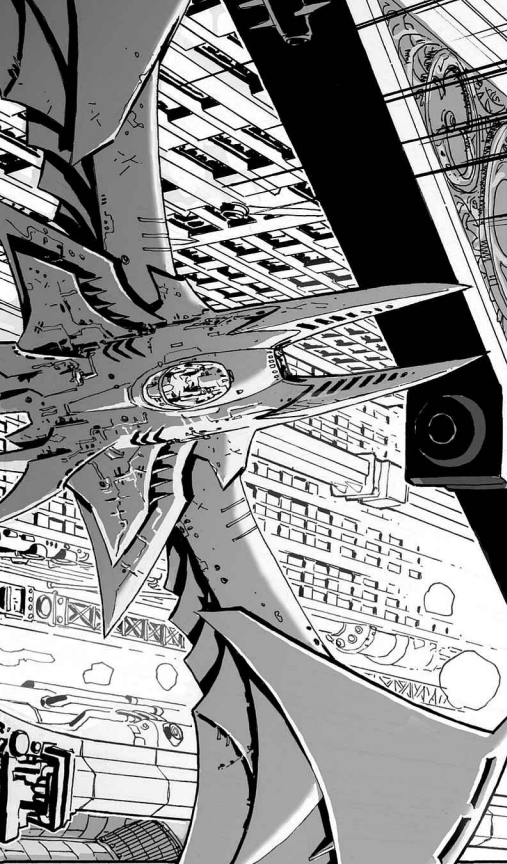
Two nights ago he rounded up the homeless and put them in a zoo.



Last night he snuck into the hospital and euthanized patients on life support.



At the scene of his crimes he'd leave bundles of cash.

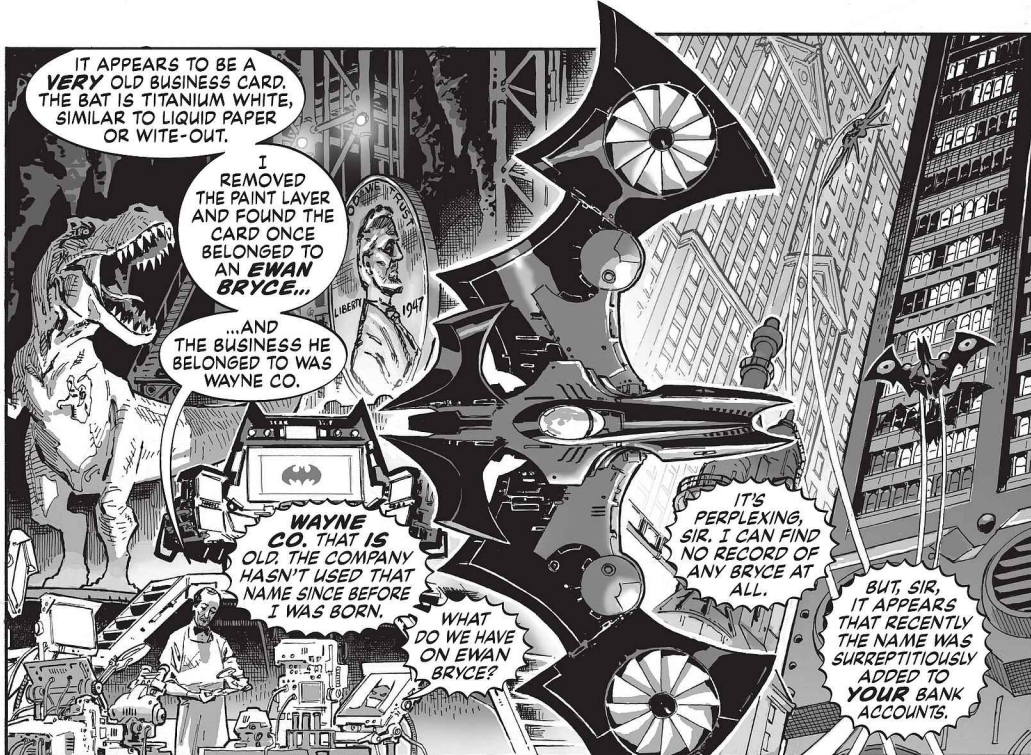


I searched the city. I tracked his movements.

But I could never catch him.

Like the same poles of a magnet, a repulsive force kept us apart.

Then I found his card...a white bat painted on white paper.



IT APPEARS TO BE A **VERY** OLD BUSINESS CARD. THE BAT IS TITANIUM WHITE, SIMILAR TO LIQUID PAPER OR WITE-OUT.

I REMOVED THE PAINT LAYER AND FOUND THE CARD ONCE BELONGED TO AN **EWAN BRYCE...**

...AND THE BUSINESS HE BELONGED TO WAS WAYNE CO.

WAYNE CO. THAT IS OLD. THE COMPANY HASN'T USED THAT NAME SINCE BEFORE I WAS BORN.

WHAT DO WE HAVE ON EWAN BRYCE?

IT'S PERPLEXING, SIR. I CAN FIND NO RECORD OF ANY BRYCE AT ALL.

BUT, SIR, IT APPEARS THAT RECENTLY THE NAME WAS SURREPTITIOUSLY ADDED TO **YOUR** BANK ACCOUNTS.



IT SEEMS, SIR, THAT YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF IDENTITY THEFT.

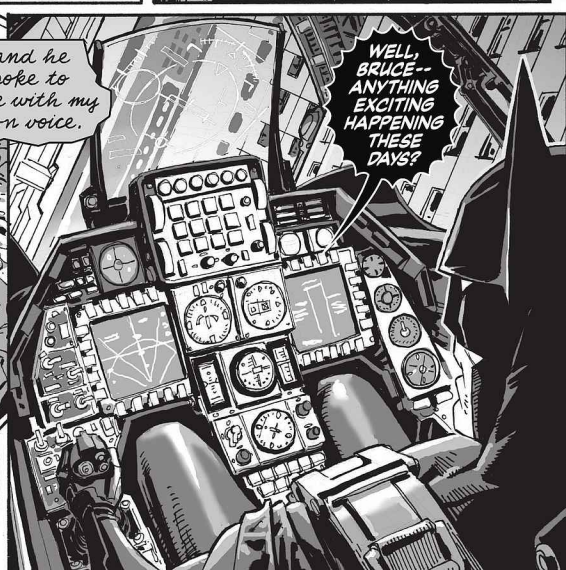


YOU'RE TELLING ME.



That's when, somehow, he tapped into my communication frequency...

...and he spoke to me with my own voice.



WELL, BRUCE-- ANYTHING EXCITING HAPPENING THESE DAYS?



WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

YOUR HOUSE HAS FOUR WALLS AND THE ROOMS INSIDE HAVE FOUR WALLS.

I WANT TO TAKE THEM AND MAKE THEM MINE.

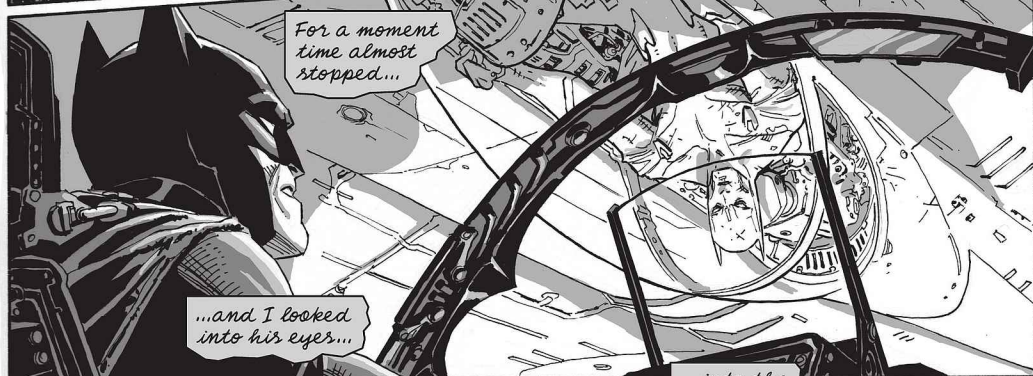
LAND PEACEFULLY AND...WE'LL WORK SOMETHING OUT.



YOU CAN LAND THE EASY WAY OR--

--GODDAMNIT, YOU CAN LAND MY WAY, BRUCE!

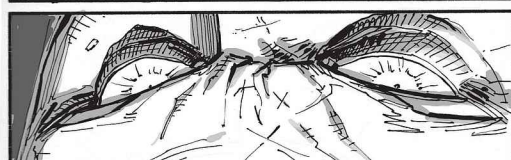
This was nonsense. I took aim at his engine. If I hit it just right, he'd be forced to land.



For a moment time almost stopped...

...and I looked into his eyes...

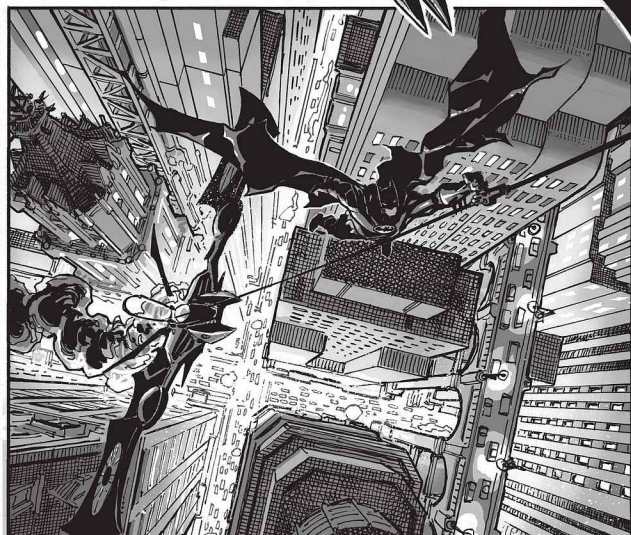
...into the night.



I was hit...! But how? He hadn't even taken a shot!



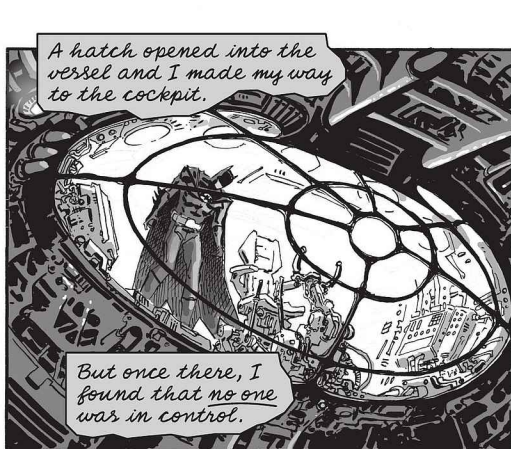
Suddenly his engine blew, as if to mirror mine.





The sight of my own lifelike face made me sick.

I needed answers.



A hatch opened into the vessel and I made my way to the cockpit.

But once there, I found that no one was in control.



My chest pounded, my ears rang...



...and I began to make my way into the heart of the floating fortress.



I crossed into a darkness that turned everything black on black.



Deep inside I heard an echo. The corridor opened into a cavernous chamber.

Then, through the shadows, the scene came into focus—



—and I could see.



I will unfold
the events—

SKREEEE

SKREEEE



SKREEEE
SKREEEE

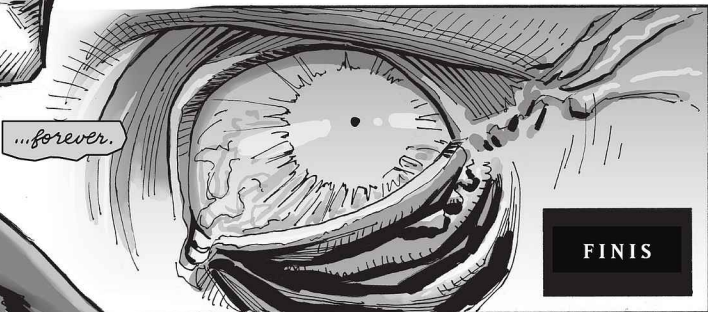


—and I will
think back to
that night...



WELCOME
HOME, SON.

...forever.



FINIS



THE BATMAN

The Devil Is

GOTHAM CITY,
WHERE THE SMELL
OF GARBAGE AND
PUTRID WASTE IN
ITS STREETS IS
AS DEEP AS THE
SMELL OF FEAR.

SOME SAY THIS
PLACE IS HELL.
BUT HELL IS FIRE
AND BRIMSTONE.
THIS CITY IS
FRIGID AND ROT.



FOUR WEEKS SINCE THE FIRST CRIME.
THREE DECAPITATED BODIES AND ONE
CLUELESS POLICE DEPARTMENT.



THE BATMAN

The Devil Is

I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A NIGHT
OF WATCHING AND WAITING WHEN A
POLICE CAR PROWLING MORTIMER'S
PLACE CHANGED MY PLANS.



I DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THEY
WERE ABLE TO BEAT ME TO IT--

--AND CAPTAIN
GORDON HAD NOT
TOLD ME ANYTHING.



in the Detail.

October 24, 1949 • Monday



in the Detail.

October 25, 1949 • Tuesday



Writer/Artist/Letters: David Aja. Editor: Dave Wilegosz.

THE BATMAN

The Devil Is



THE BATMAN

The Devil Is



in the Detail.



October 27, 1949 • Thursday



in the Detail.



October 28, 1949 • Friday

THE BATMAN

The Devil Is

I WAS TRYING TO DECIDE IF I SHOULD TALK TO THE POLICE WHEN CAPTAIN JAMES GORDON MADE MY DECISION FOR ME.

WE HAVE NO WEAPON.

THE FINGERPRINT EXPERTS HAVEN'T TURNED UP ANYTHING WE COULD USE.

WINDOWS AND DOORS CHECKED, NO SIGN OF A FORCED ENTRY.

THE BATMAN

The Devil Is

"SATANIC OR NOT, NOBODY HERE CARES ABOUT ONE SCUMBAG KILLING OTHERS.

"RAY, ROUSSOS, SPRANG, AND NOW MORTIMER..."

"THEY ALL HAD NARCOTICS CHARGES, SCORE-SETTLING, MOST LIKELY."

THERE WAS A POLICE DETAIL AT MORTIMER'S HOUSE WHEN I ARRIVED.

I WAS TOO FAR AND IT WAS TOO FOR ME TO SEE A ELSE BEFORE T BUT I DO NOT IT WAS BY CHA

in the Detail.

October 31, 1949 • Monday

WHAT THE HELL
ARE YOU WAITING
FOR, CAPTAIN?

FOR EVIDENCE.
AND ORDERS.

THE COMMISSIONER IS
NOT REALLY INTERESTED
IN WASTING DEPARTMENT
TIME AND MEANS WITH
THIS CASE.

in the Detail.

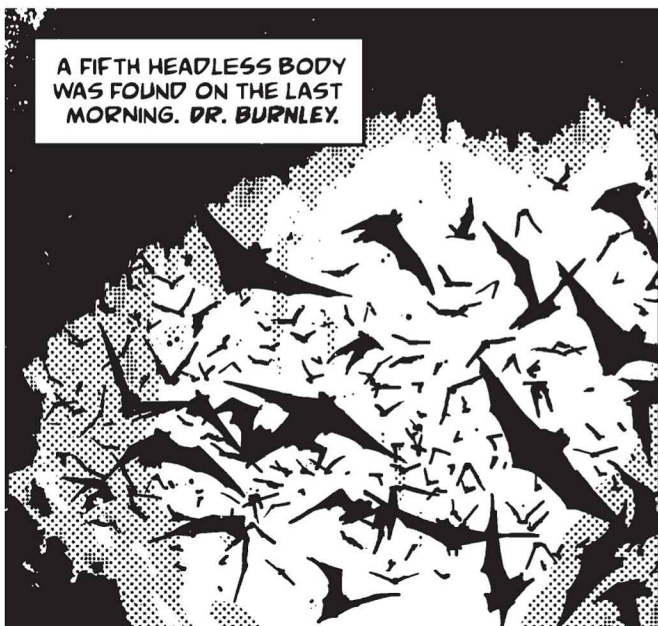
November 1, 1949 • Tuesday

E
R AWAY
O DARK
ANYTHING
HEY LEFT
BELIEVE
ANCE.

AS YOU KNOW,
WE'VE ALWAYS HAD A
FEW ROTTEN APPLES
IN THE DEPARTMENT.

I TRUST YOU BUT I DO NOT
REALLY TRUST YOUR KIND.
NOT THAT LONG AGO YOU
ALL WERE SHOOTING
AT MY CAPE.

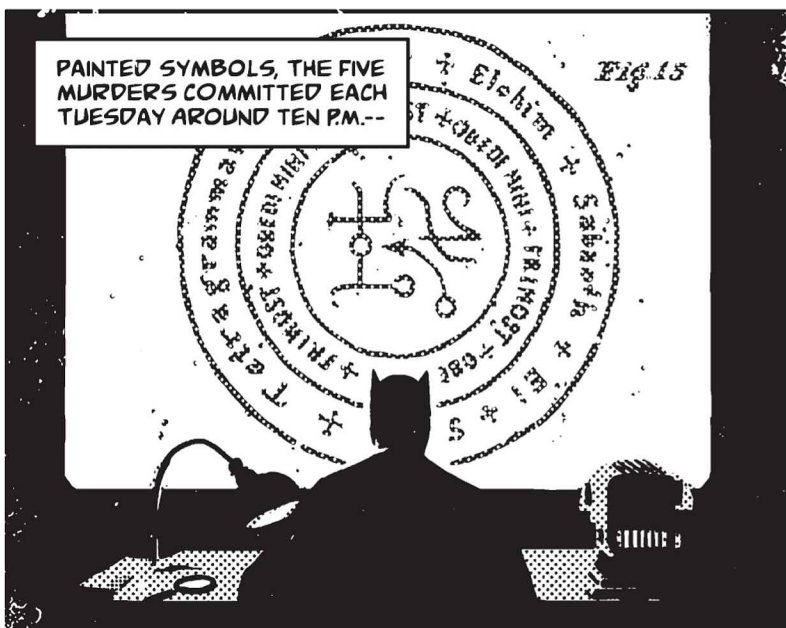
THE BATMAN



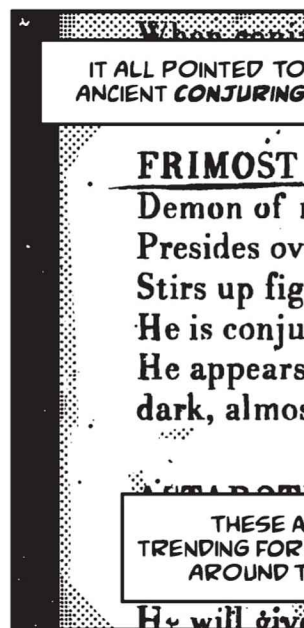
The Devil Is



THE BATMAN

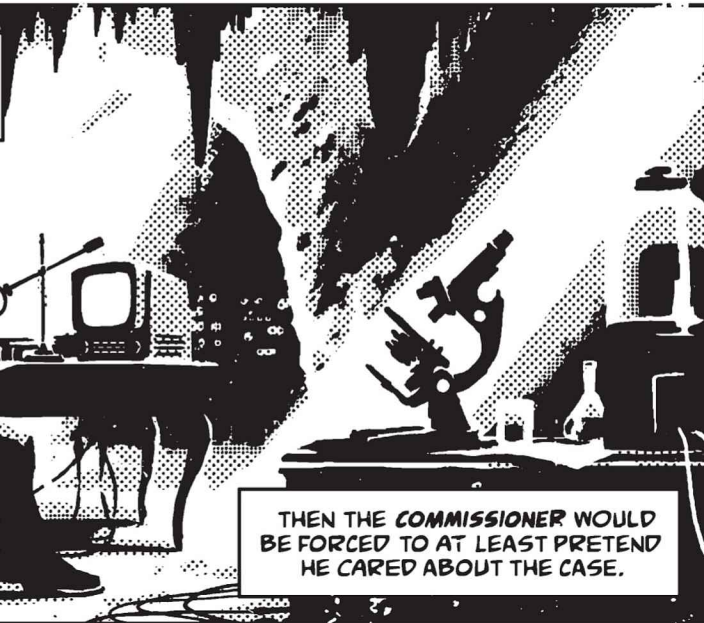


The Devil Is



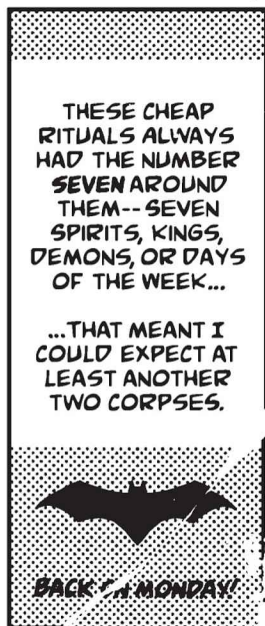
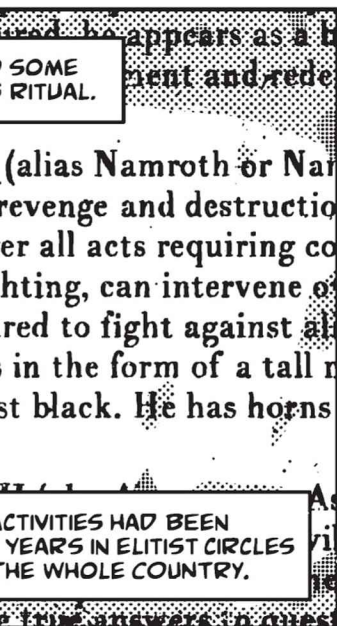
in the Detail.

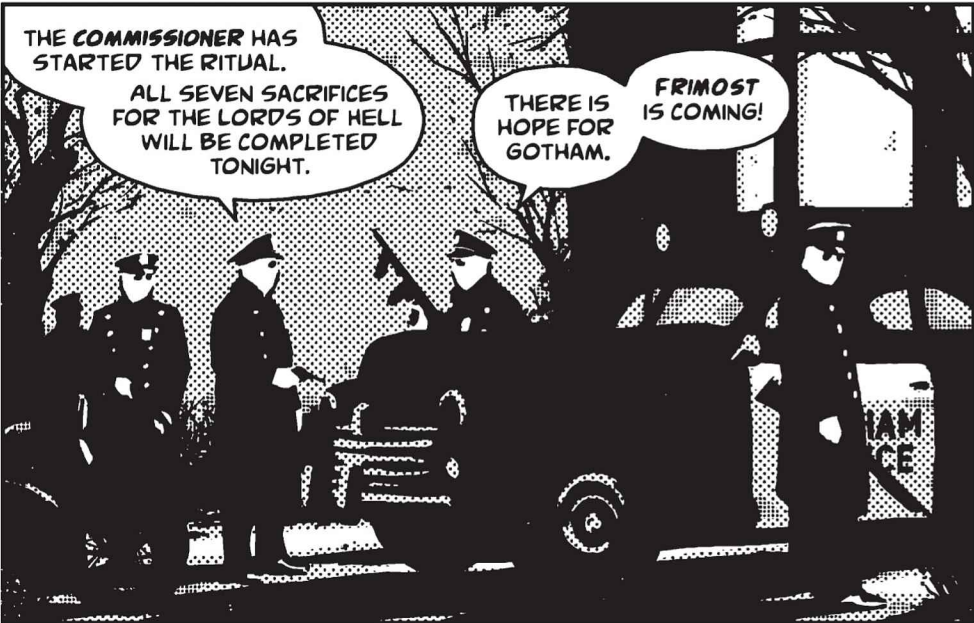
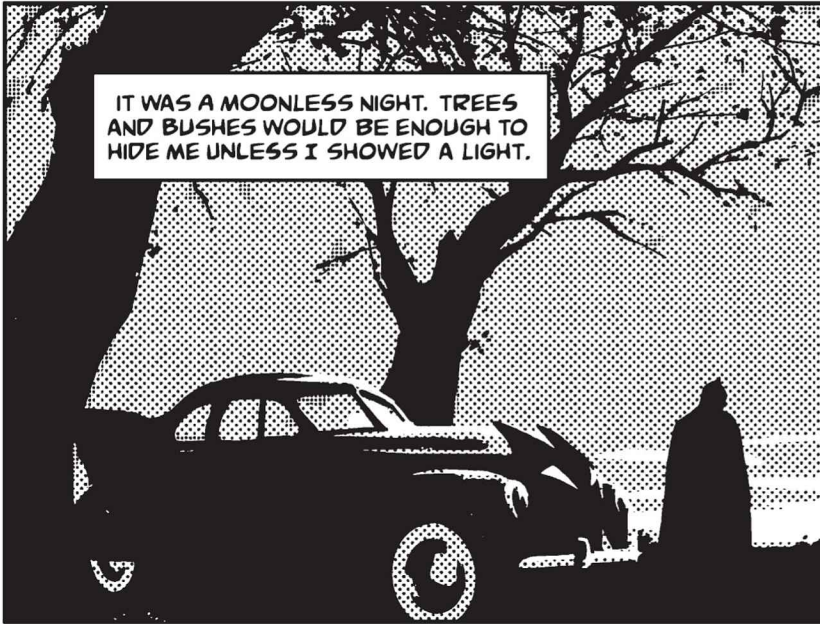
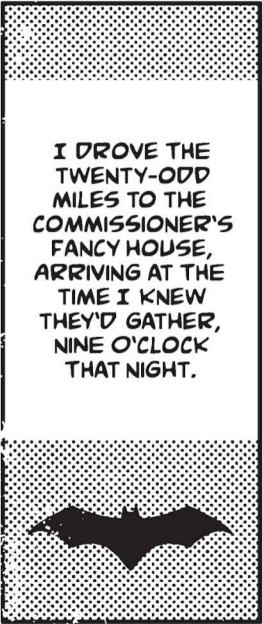
November 3, 1949 • Thursday



in the Detail.

November 5, 1949 • Saturday





in the Detail.

November 28, 1949 • Monday



in the Detail.

November 29, 1949 • Tuesday



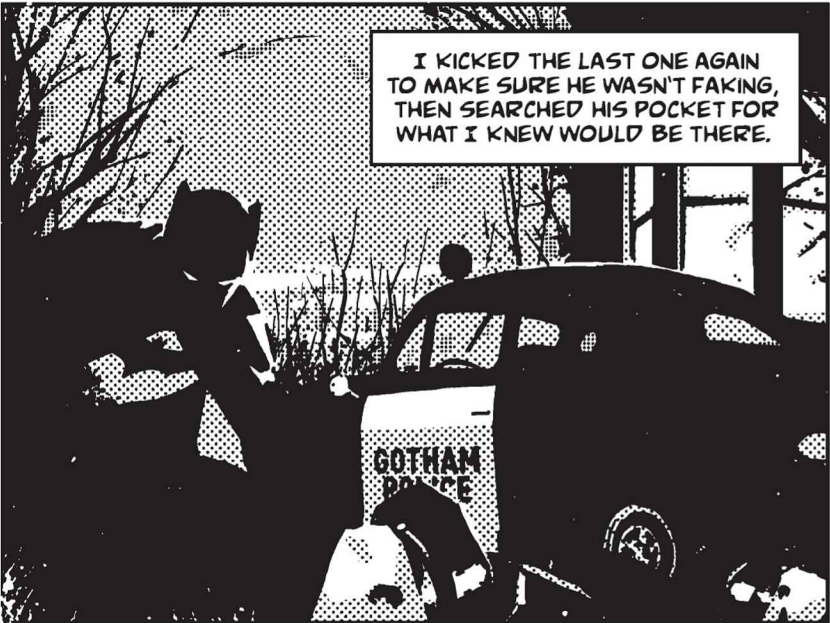
THE BATMAN



The Devil Is



THE BATMAN



The Devil Is



in the Detail.

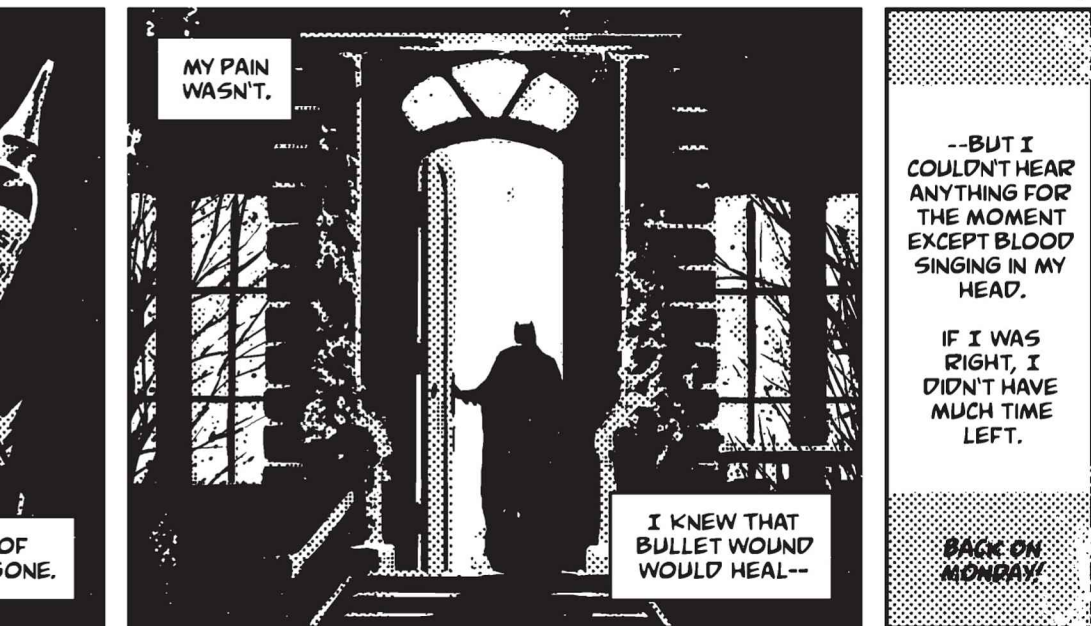


December 1, 1949 • Thursday



in the Detail.

December 3, 1949 • Saturday



THE BATMAN



The Devil Is



THE BATMAN



The Devil Is

in the Detail.



December 6, 1949 • Tuesday



in the Detail.



December 7, 1949 • Wednesday



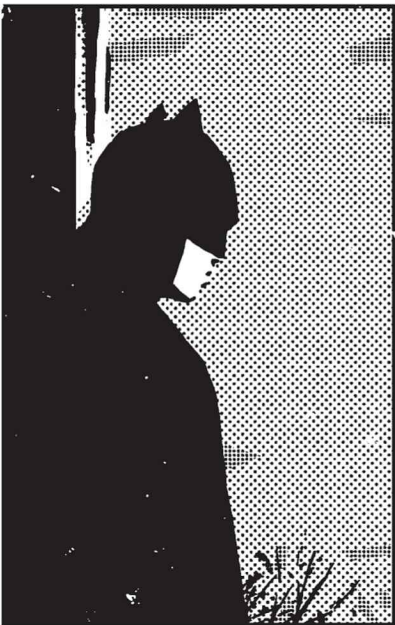
THE BATMAN

The Devil is



THE BATMAN

The Devil is



in the Detail.

December 8, 1949 • Thursday



in the Detail.

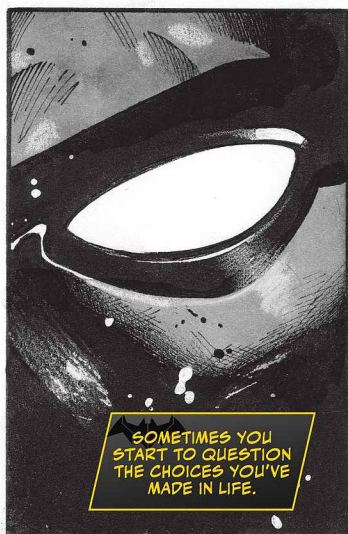
December 9, 1949 • Friday



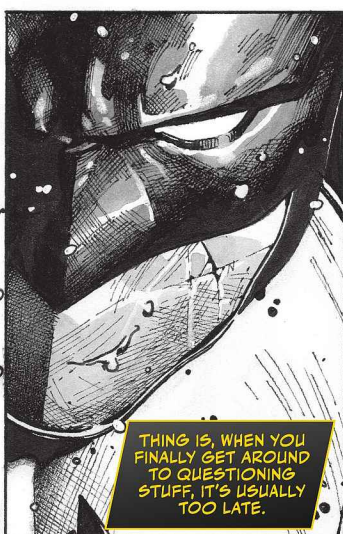


BATMAN BLACK & WHITE #4

VARIANT COVER BY GABRIELE DELL'OTTO



SOMETIMES YOU
START TO QUESTION
THE CHOICES YOU'VE
MADE IN LIFE.



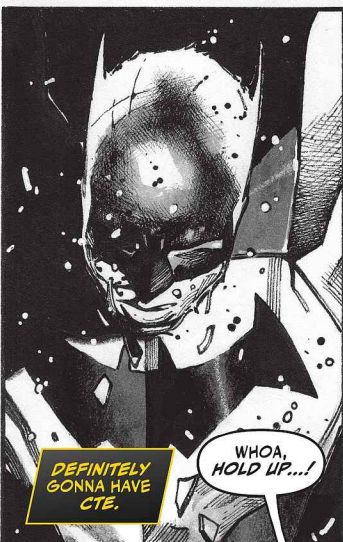
THING IS, WHEN YOU
FINALLY GET AROUND
TO QUESTIONING
STUFF, IT'S USUALLY
TOO LATE.



YEAH. TOO
DAMN LATE.



ONE DAY, IF I LIVE
THROUGH THIS...I'M
GONNA HAVE CTE.



DEFINITELY
GONNA HAVE
CTE.

WHOA,
HOLD UP...!

THE CAVALRY

JOHN RIDLEY Writer OLIVIER COIPEL Artist

DERON BENNETT Letters

BEN ABERNATHY & DAVE WIELGOSZ Editors

THE IGLOO BOIS,
PENGUIN'S EX-HENCHMEN
WHO FORMED THEIR
OWN GANG AFTER THE
MAGISTRATE TOOK
OUT PENGUIN.

THEY'RE RACIST,
ANTI-GOVERNMENT,
ANARCHISTS, AND ALL-
AROUND \$#!%#@
PEOPLE.

THEY'RE TRAFFICKING
GHOST GUNS. THEY
KIDNAPPED A COP. AND
THEY'RE TRYING TO
KILL ME.

DUDE'S
BLACK.

BATMAN
AIN'T
BLACK.

WHO THE
HELL IS THIS
#@%\$!#--

THESE
PEOPLE ARE
TAKIN' OVER
EVERYTHING.

KILL
'EM. THEN
LET'S GO
KILL SOME
COPS.

HEY, YOU GOT
ANY MORE METH?
I'M STARING TO
CRASH.





WHAT'S
UP, BOY? WHY
YOU FAKIN'
LIKE YOU'RE
BATMAN?

I AM
BATMA--



UHH!



YOU AIN'T
BATMAN. I *SEEN*
BATMAN WHEN I
WAS WORKING
FOR PENGUIN.

HELL, I
GOT MY BUTT
KICKED BY
BATMAN.

SOMETIMES YOU
QUESTION YOUR
CHOICES...



BUT OTHER TIMES...
OTHER TIMES YOU
KNOW YOU'VE MADE
THE *RIGHT* CHOICES.



LIKE WHO'S
DOWN FOR YOU.
AND WHO'S GOT
YOUR BACK.



YOU AIN'T
NOTHING BUT
THE HIRED
HELP.

IF I'DA
KNOWN THAT,
YOU'DA BEEN DEAD
A LOOOONG
TIME AGO.

WHAT ARE
YOU GRINNIN'
ABOUT?

SHE'S
COMING.
AND SHE'S
BENT.

WHO
THE HELL
IS--





WHAT
TOOK YOU
SO LONG?

THERE WERE
SIX OF THESE
GUYS GUARDING
THE COP.

ALL YOU
HAD TO DO WAS
DISTRACT THIS
BUNCH.

YOU TRY
GETTING BEAT IN
THE HEAD WITH A
CROWBAR FOR
TEN MINUTES.

ALL KINDS OF
WAYS TO DISTRACT
PEOPLE. IF THAT'S
THE BEST YOU
CAN COME UP
WITH...



KILL 'EM
BOTH!

DAMN. WE
SHOULD USE
GUNS.

THEY GOT
GUNS.

NO
GUNS.

NO
GUNS.

I DON'T GET WHY
WE HAVE TO HAVE
PRINCIPLES WHEN
THEY--

NO.
GUNS!



THERE ARE
SIXTEEN OF
THEM.

ONLY SIX
ARE TRAINED IN
HAND-TO-HAND
COMBAT.

THE FOUR TO
THE FAR LEFT
ARE WHACKED
ON DRUGS.

THEIR LEADER'S
EX-MILITARY. HE'S
THE BIGGEST
THREAT.

WANNA
TAG-TEAM
HIM?

OH,
NO. NO. HIM
AND ME...WE'VE
GOT SOME
RECONCILING
TO DO.



COOL.
YOU TAKE
HIM, I GOT
THE REST.

READY?

LET'S
GO H.A.M.





MAAAN,
THIS WAS NOT A
GOOD IDEA.

HEY, IF
YOU'RE FEELING
GUILTY ABOUT GOING
OVERBOARD ON SOME
FASCIST, COP-
KILLING--

NAH,
THAT'S
NOT IT.

YOU AND ME DOING
THIS BAT-THING. IF
SOMETHING WERE TO
HAPPEN TO BOTH OF
US, MOM AND DAD
WOULD--

MOM AND DAD
WOULDN'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO WITH
THEMSELVES 'CAUSE
THEY LOVE US,
BUT THEY HATE
MASKS.

LOOK, OUR
FAMILY...WE'RE JUST
CAUGHT UP IN BAT-
NONSENSE.

DAD WAS MAKING
WEAPONS FOR HIM.
MOM WAS WRITING
LAWS AGAINST HIM.
LUKE WANTED TO BE
LIKE HIM, AND
TAMARA...

WELL,
YOU KNOW
THE DEAL
WITH TAM.

BUT
THING IS,
JACE, WE DON'T
CONTROL OUR
DESTINIES.

ALL WE CAN
DO IS LIVE UP
TO 'EM.

YEAH, SOMETIMES
YOU QUESTION THE
CHOICES YOU MAKE
IN LIFE, OTHER
TIMES...

OTHER TIMES
YOU'RE GOOD
WITH THEM ALL.

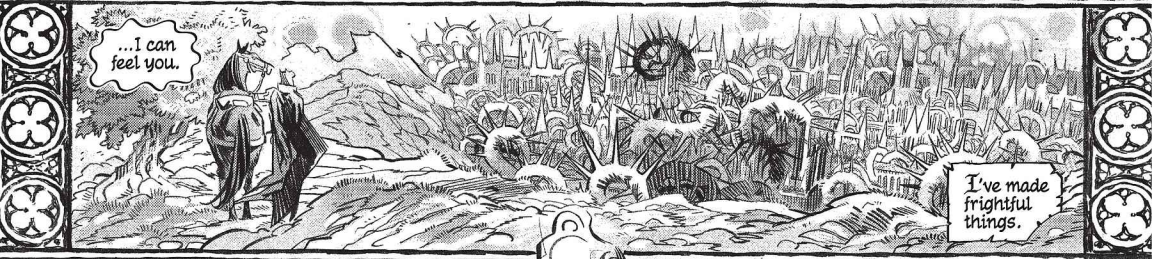
END



KNIGHT...

A Kingdom OF THORNS

Bilquis Evelyn
Writer & Artist
Aditya Bidikar Letters
Dave Wielgosz Editor



...I can feel you.


I've made frightful things.



The uncontrollable has taken power.


Invading.

Expelling.




Entering minds,
converting *decayed*
emotions into pure
insanity.

Removing the
nauseating human
presence from *my*
kingdom.



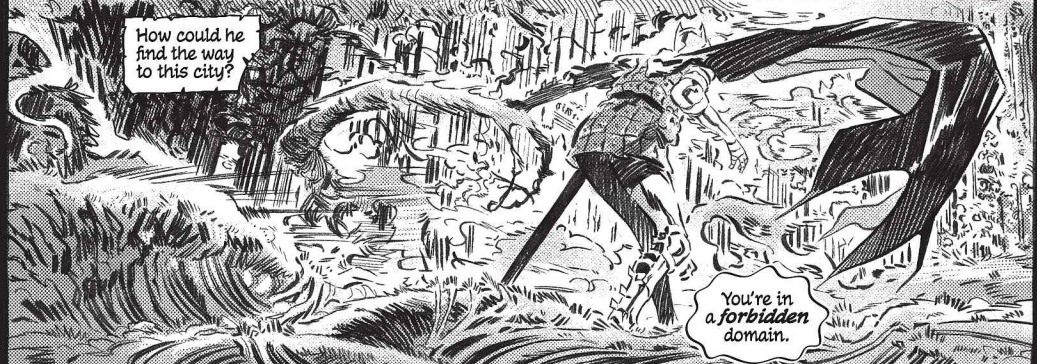
I closed the gates to
their memories, like
a fog amongst trees.

No one can remember the
way to this place. But...




How did
you find your
way?

...He did.



How could he
find the way
to this city?

You're in
a *forbidden*
domain.



I...I can't reach
his mind.

I'm
warning
you to
STOP.

I can't connect with his brain like other living things. He keeps coming, opening the way.

GHHR...

His touch bringing back *invasive* memories.

Reminding me of a time when I was only an Ivy climbing inside an *explosion* of life. *Untouched* by his kind.

Then people started coming and at first... I truly *loved* them.

INSOLENT HUMAN BEING!

All those beautiful constructions, raised by talented and curious minds.

They quickly organized themselves.

Sculpting their way through nature.

Their devotion became a city, and it was like a piece of art. I loved it, as much as the nature itself.

It was fascinating.

Your people are all the same... **SELFISH.**

They became part of me, in a way.

And from that moment on, I couldn't understand it well, but something started to *bleed* inside me.

Something was wrong.

But I kept providing what they needed.

I'm not afraid to tell you that I don't know how you can trespass in my domain.

Because I can pierce your trifle flesh.

I...ghrr... tried to give them
all the resources I could.

But they started
digging, taking
treasures for free.

Little
trifles make
wounds
sometimes,
knight.

I don't think they knew
what they wanted to and
they were never satisfied.

Little trifles
making signs
all around.

But then, something
happened—I don't...
know.


And we only
accept we are
exposed when
it's too late,
don't we?

They dug more **profoundly**
than I thought was possible.

When
the mind
is torn
apart.

I felt an inexplicable
desperation over-
coming me.

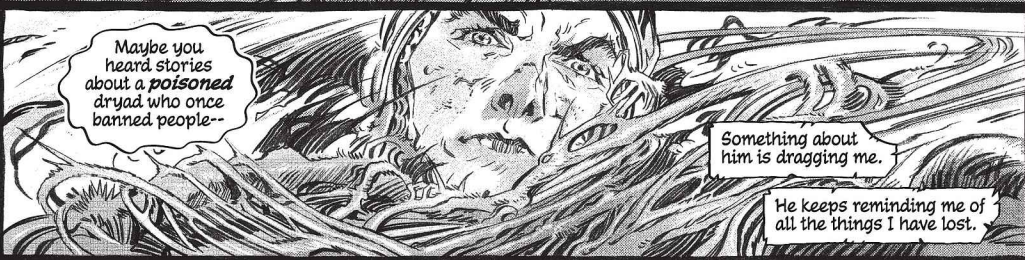
An **ache** which made
my body explode.



All my veins gushed unbelievable power against these people who believed they had control.

In this place I *own* the nature, Knight.

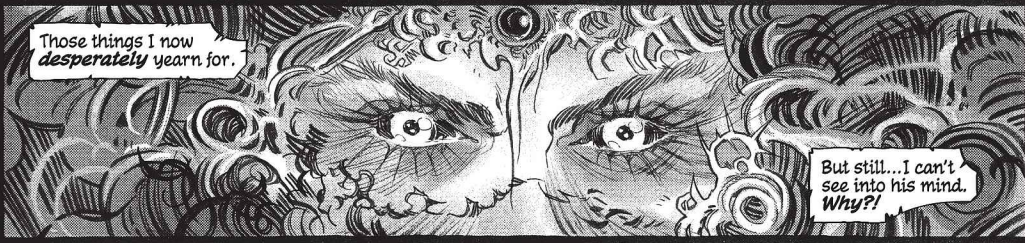
Even though I felt like a loser.



Maybe you heard stories about a *poisoned* dryad who once banned people--

Something about him is dragging me.

He keeps reminding me of all the things I have lost.



Those things I now *desperately* yearn for.


But still...I can't see into his mind. *Why?!*



FORGIVE ME, BUT... I...



My chest is aching-- Not again.



If I can't reach your mind my way, I will find another.

BR--ING... IT...



LET. ME. IN.

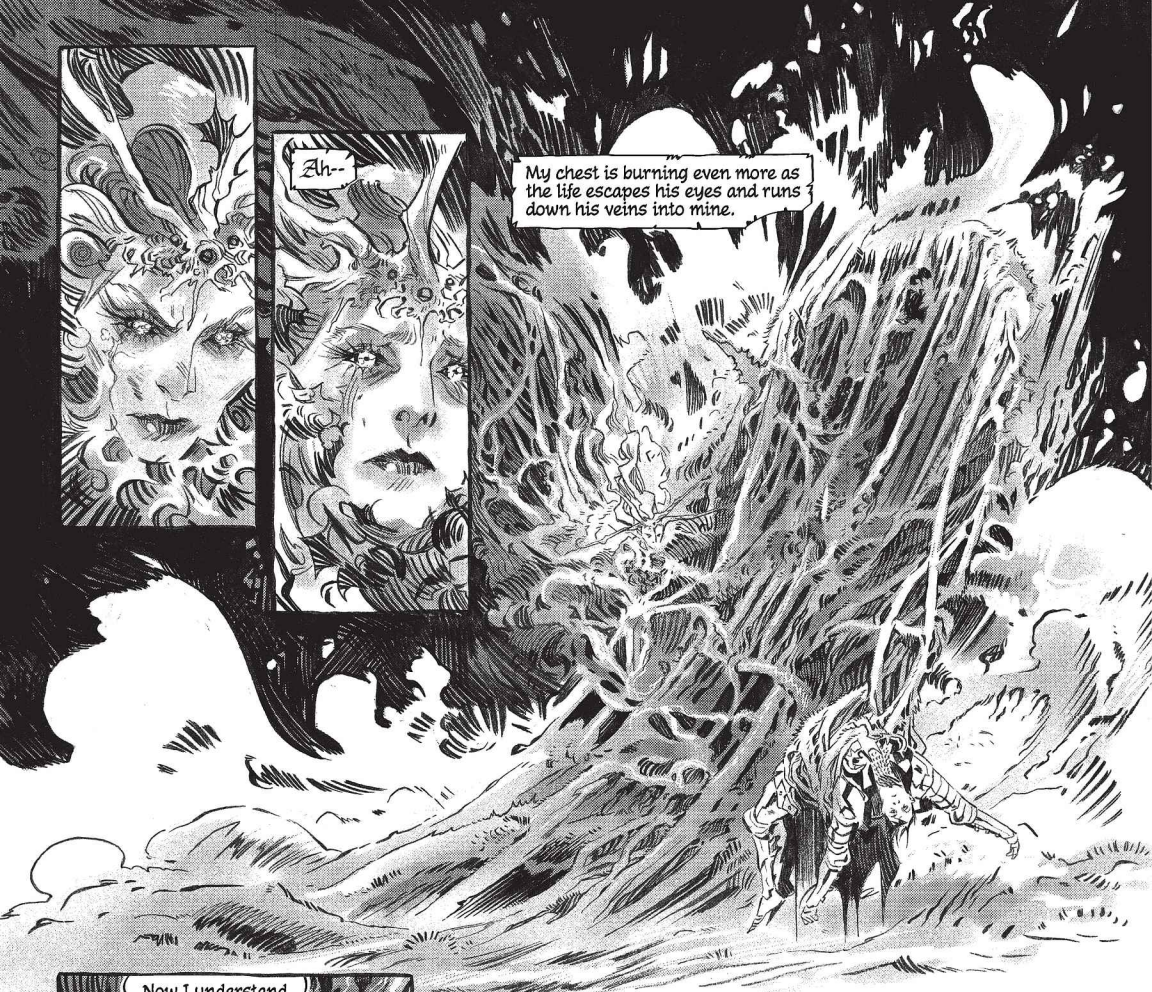


Let me SEE.

B--BA...



My chest is burning even more as
the life escapes his eyes and runs
down his veins into mine.



Now I understand
what is different
about you.



He brought me
what these people
dug out of me.

He brought it
back to me...

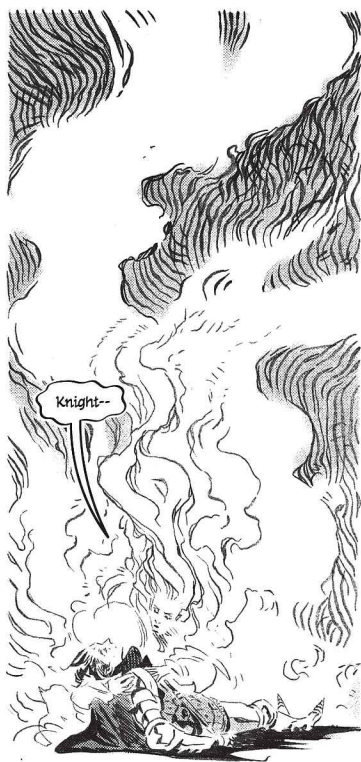


Back where it belongs.



I couldn't reach him because he was carrying this part of me. And it led him back to me.

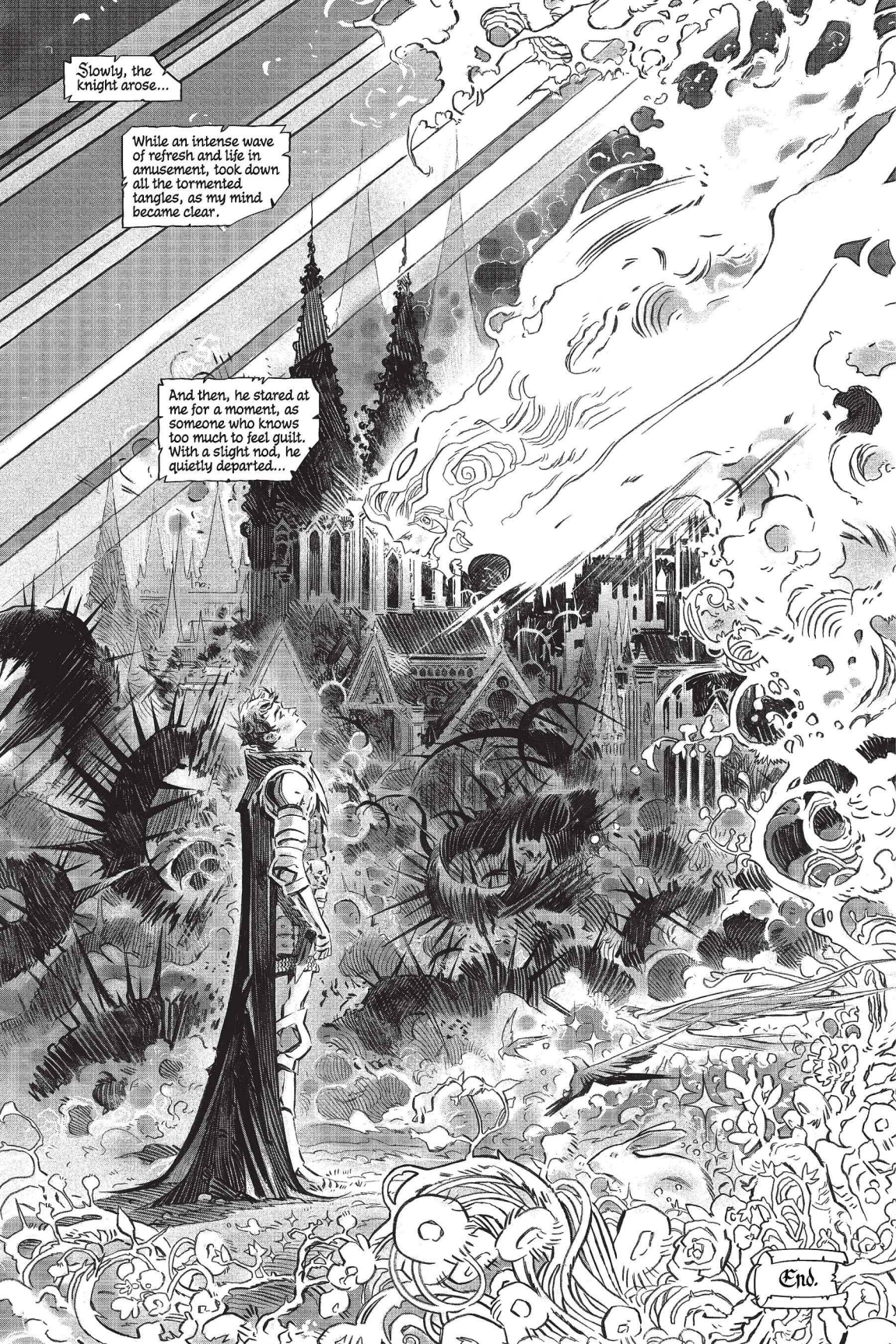
After a long time, I begin to understand what occurred, unraveling the confusion of it all. But for now...



Knight--



--wake up.



Slowly, the
knight arose...

While an intense wave
of refresh and life in
amusement, took down
all the tormented
tangles, as my mind
became clear.

And then, he stared at
me for a moment, as
someone who knows
too much to feel guilt.
With a slight nod, he
quietly departed...

End.

MY FATHER MADE
ME WHO I AM.




A black and white comic panel showing Batman from the chest up, in profile, looking towards the right. He is wearing his iconic cowl and cape. The background is a plain, light-colored sky.

HE BROUGHT
ME UP, OF
COURSE, BUT
HE DID WAY
MORE THAN
THAT...

A black and white comic panel showing Batman from the chest up, in profile, looking down. He is wearing his iconic cowl and cape. The background is a plain, light-colored sky.

HE INSTILLED
VALUES WITHIN ME.

A black and white comic panel showing a high-angle view of a city street with several buildings. Batman is flying in the center of the frame, looking down. The buildings have arched windows and a classic architectural style.

BY EXAMPLE, HE
TAUGHT ME THE
TYPE OF PERSON
I SHOULD BE.

A black and white comic panel showing a close-up of Batman's face as he flies. He is looking down with a serious expression. The background is a plain, light-colored sky.

TO KNOW IN
MY HEART WHAT
IS *GOOD*.

A black and white comic panel showing a wide view of a city street with several buildings. Batman is flying in the center of the frame, looking down. The buildings have arched windows and a classic architectural style.

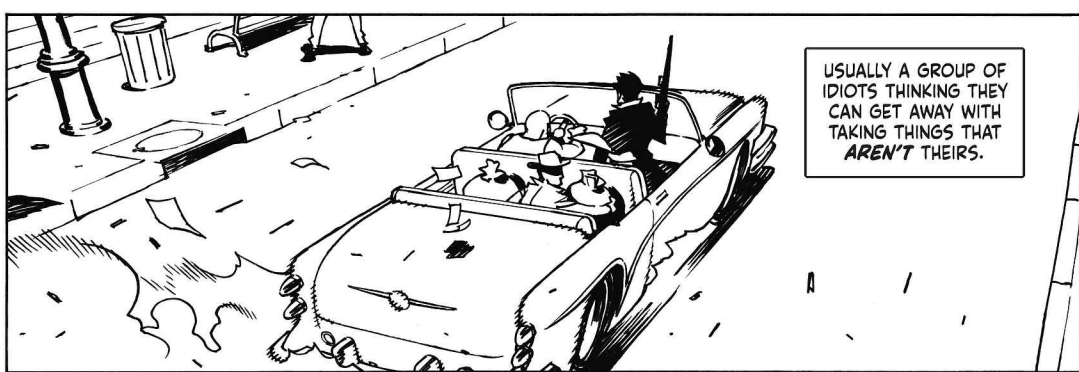
AND WHAT
IS *BAD*.



MORE OFTEN
THAN NOT...



...THE BAD IS *EASY*
TO RECOGNIZE.



USUALLY A GROUP OF
IDIOTS THINKING THEY
CAN GET AWAY WITH
TAKING THINGS THAT
AREN'T THEIRS.

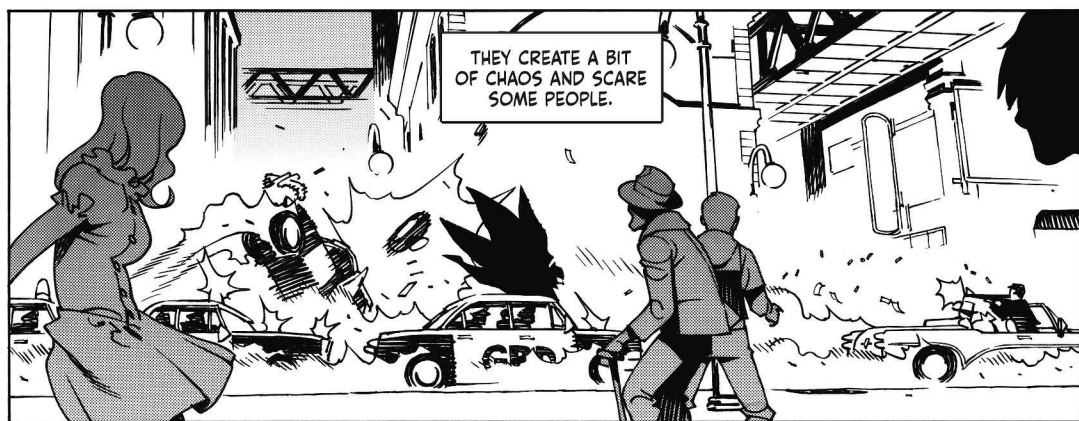


THEY CAN'T.



THERE'S NOTHING
SPECIAL ABOUT
THEM.

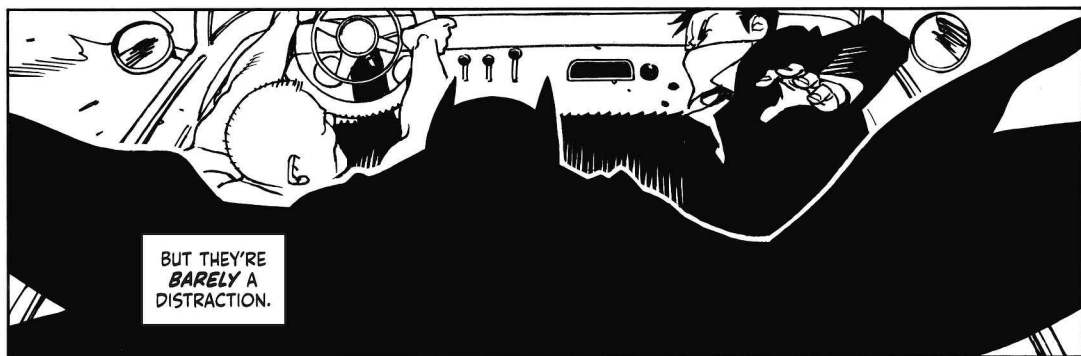
THEY'RE THE
EASIEST TO
DEAL WITH.



THEY CREATE A BIT
OF CHAOS AND SCARE
SOME PEOPLE.



AND WASTE
A BIT OF MY
TIME.



BUT THEY'RE
BARELY A
DISTRACTION.



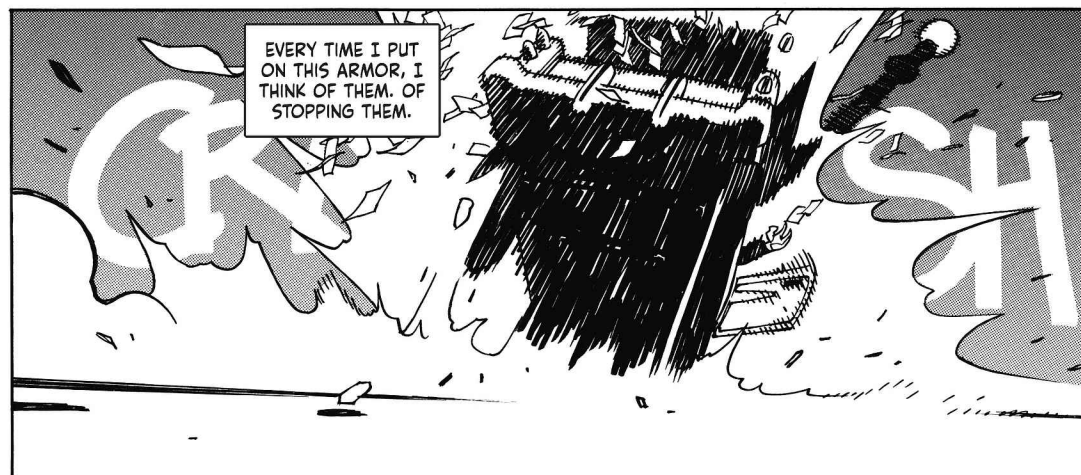
THE REAL BAD
GUYS, THE ONES
WHO KEEP ME UP
AT NIGHT...



...ARE THE ONES
WHO HAVE HAUNTED
GOTHAM SINCE BEFORE
I INHERITED MY
FATHER'S LEGACY.

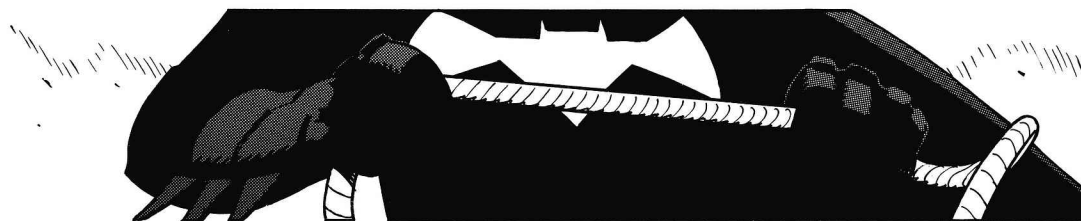


EVERY TIME I PUT
ON THIS ARMOR, I
THINK OF THEM. OF
STOPPING THEM.



BUT UNTIL THEY MAKE
THEMSELVES KNOWN...

...I KEEP
SHARPENING
MY SKILLS
WITH THESE
DIMWITS.

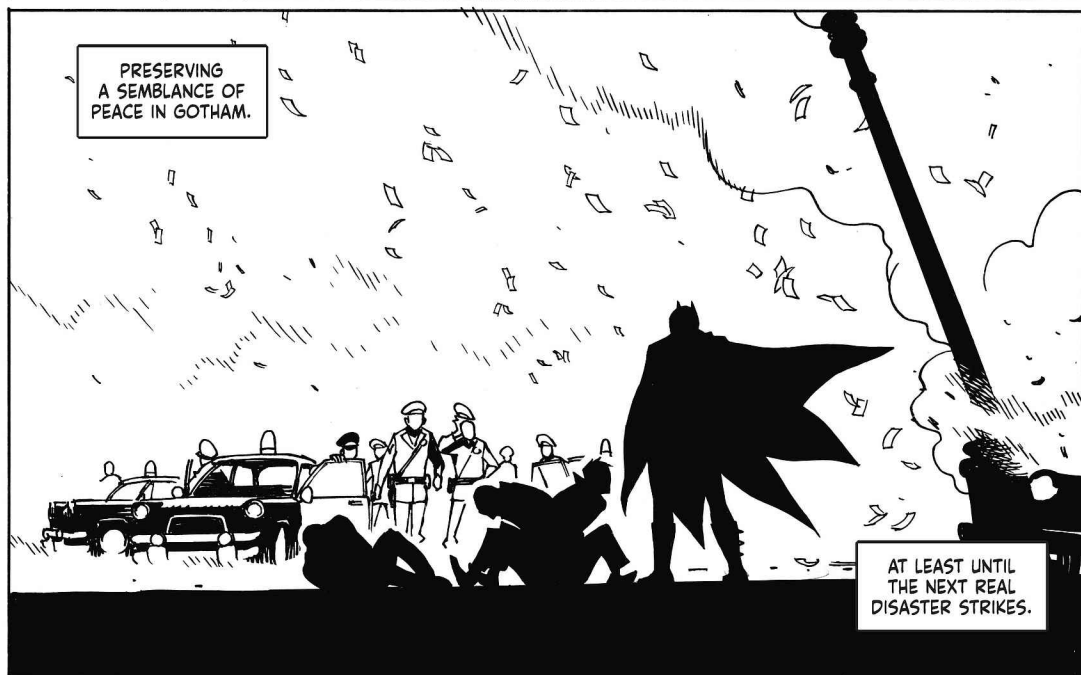


IT MAKES
THE STREETS
OF GOTHAM
A BIT SAFER.

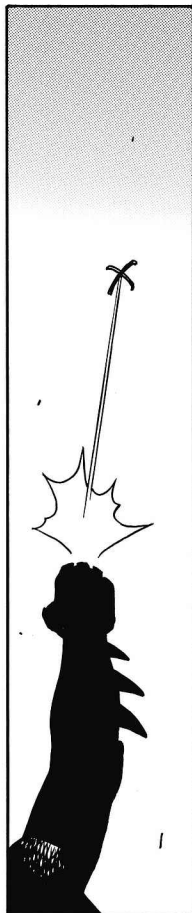
THE POLICE A
BIT MORE HONEST.



PRESERVING
A SEMBLANCE OF
PEACE IN GOTHAM.



AT LEAST UNTIL
THE NEXT REAL
DISASTER STRIKES.



MY FATHER
WAS A GREAT
MAN.



HE LOVED
GOTHAM
CITY.

I TELL MYSELF HE
WOULD THINK THE
CITY WAS IN GOOD
HANDS.



UNDER *MY* CARE.

AS SAFE AS HE
TRIED TO MAKE
IT HIMSELF.

MY FATHER...



...WAS
BRUCE WAYNE.

I AM THE BAT

BENGAL WRITER & ARTIST
GABRIELA DOWNIE LETTERS
DAVE WIELGOSZ EDITOR

END.



WHAT
THE HELL
IS IT?!

IT'S
EVERYWHERE!

The Night of March 7.



EVERYWHERE
I TURN,
I SEE IT!

IT'S HIM,
BRO. IT HAS
TO BE HIM.



THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
WHATEVER IT IS, WE
CAN OUTRUN IT.

DAMN GOTHAM!
IT'S LIKE A FRIGGIN'
INSIDE-OUT MAZE
MADE BY A CRAZY
PERSON!

HERE,
WE'VE GOTTA GET
FAR AWAY. WE'VE
GOTTA GO--



THIS
WAY?

BRO,
OF ALL
THE PLACES YOU
COULD HAVE
RUN...



YOU HAD
TO PICK THIS
ONE?!

OH GOD.
OH NO, NO,
NO, NO.



Y-YOU FEEL
THAT, BRO?
THE AIR...

THE AIR
JUST GOT
SO...



COLD.

AN UNQUIET KNIGHT

TIM SEELEY WRITER • KELLEY JONES ARTIST • ROB LEIGH LETTERS • DAVE WIELGOSZ EDITOR



PERHAPS YOUR CHILLED BONES NEED A BIT OF HELLFIRE.

BUT BE WARY, LEST YOUR SOULS BE SWEEPED UP IN THE WIDENING GYRE.

Hnnh.



A DEMON. A DAMNED DEMON.

THE. THE DAMNED DEMON.

YOU DISBELIEVE WHAT YOUR EYES DO SEE?



THEN RUN ALONG, THERE ARE OTHER PLACES YOU SHOULD BE.

GONE, GONE, THAT'S HOW THE TASTY MORSEL GOES.

AND HOW FARE YOU, MISTRESS RAVEN ROSE?







THAT...
THAT CAN'T
BE...

NO.



TRAP
GOF.

I'M SORRY, BRUCE.
BUT IN LIFE, YOU WERE
A SCIENTIST, A DETECTIVE.
GO AHEAD, SCRUTINIZE THE
EVIDENCE IN FRONT
OF YOU.

LISTEN FOR
YOUR PULSE. TRY
TO FEEL THE FLOW
OF WARM BLOOD
TO YOUR FACE.



GET TO
THE TRUTH
HOWEVER YOU
NEED TO.



GOD.

BUT THIS...
IT'S BEEN
YEARS, ZEE.
AND YOU--

HAVEN'T
AGED A
DAY?



EVOMER
CIGAM
PUEKAM.

I'M A WOMAN
IN THE ENTERTAINMENT
BUSINESS, HONEY. SOME
THINGS HAVE CHANGED,
AND SOME THINGS
STAYED THE SAME.



NO, BRUCE. THAT'S ACTUALLY WHY I'M HERE. THE HIGHER-UPS HAVE VERY STRICT RULES ABOUT THIS SORT OF THING, AND INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS LIKE ETRIGAN, RAVEN ROSE, AND I HAVE TO ENFORCE THEM.



YES, I UNDERSTAND.

WHAT NOW, ZEE?



WE FIX THIS.

TO DO THAT, I JUST NEED YOU TO REMEMBER SOMETHING, BRUCE. I NEED YOU TO THINK BACK TO THAT NIGHT WHEN YOU WERE A BOY, IN CRIME ALLEY.

BEFORE THE TREMBLING ANGER.

BEFORE THE VOW TO GET JUSTICE AND REVENGE.

BEFORE THE TRAINING.

BEFORE YOU CREATED THE BATMAN TO MAKE GOTHAM EVERYTHING YOUR FATHER THOUGHT IT COULD BE.

WHAT DID YOU WANT MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD?

I WANTED MY PARENTS BACK.

I WANTED TO SEE THEM. I WANTED TO HEAR THEIR VOICES. I WANTED TO HOLD THEM.



GOOD.

NOW, HOLD ONTO THAT FEELING, BRUCE. BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO DO SOME MAGIC.



TA-DA.

GO TO YOUR PARENTS. GO TO THOMAS AND MARTHA WAYNE.

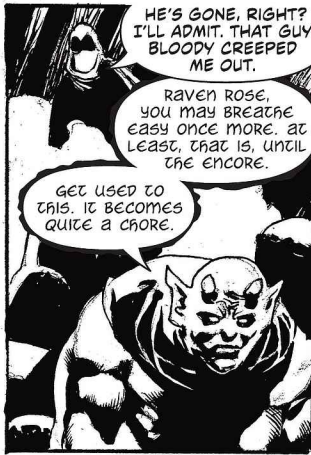


THAT'S IT?

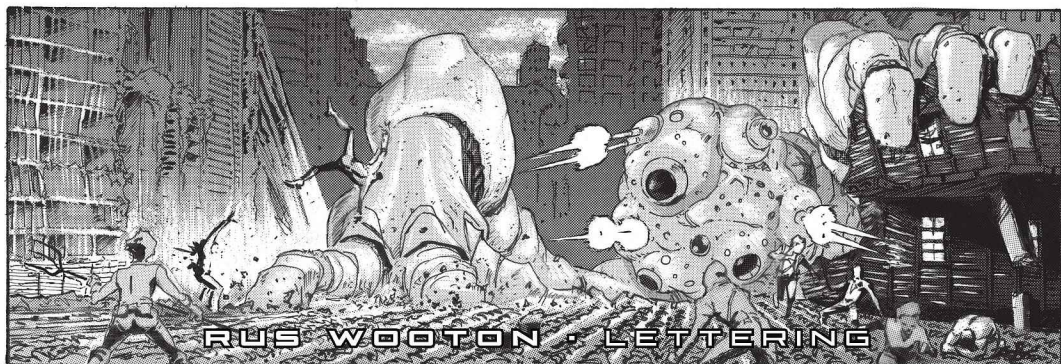
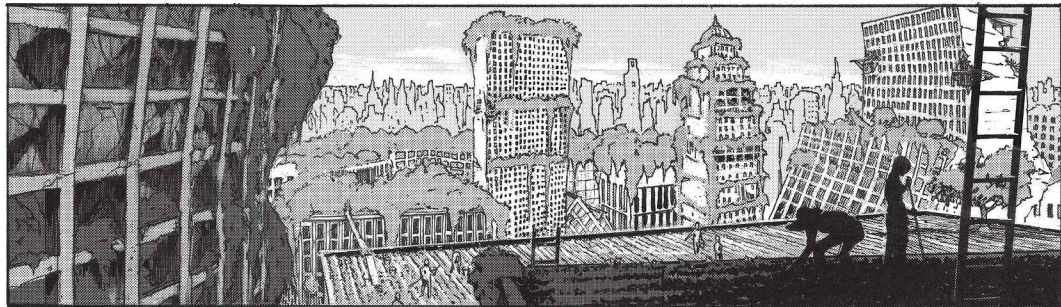
THAT'S IT.



SEE THEM. HEAR THEIR VOICES. HOLD THEM.

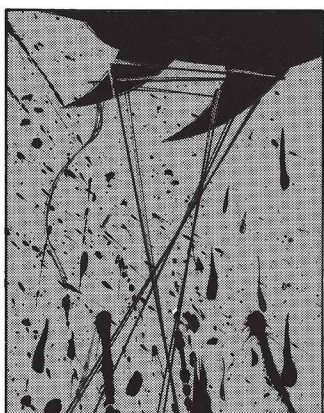
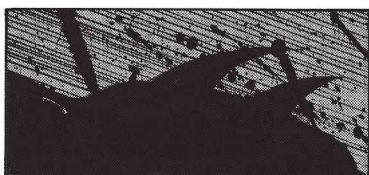
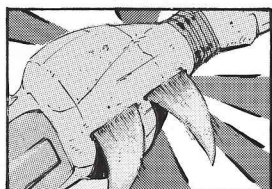
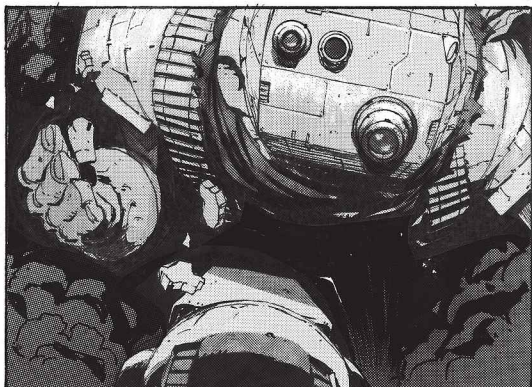
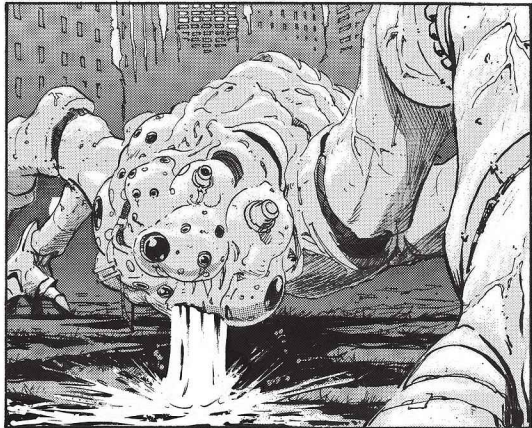


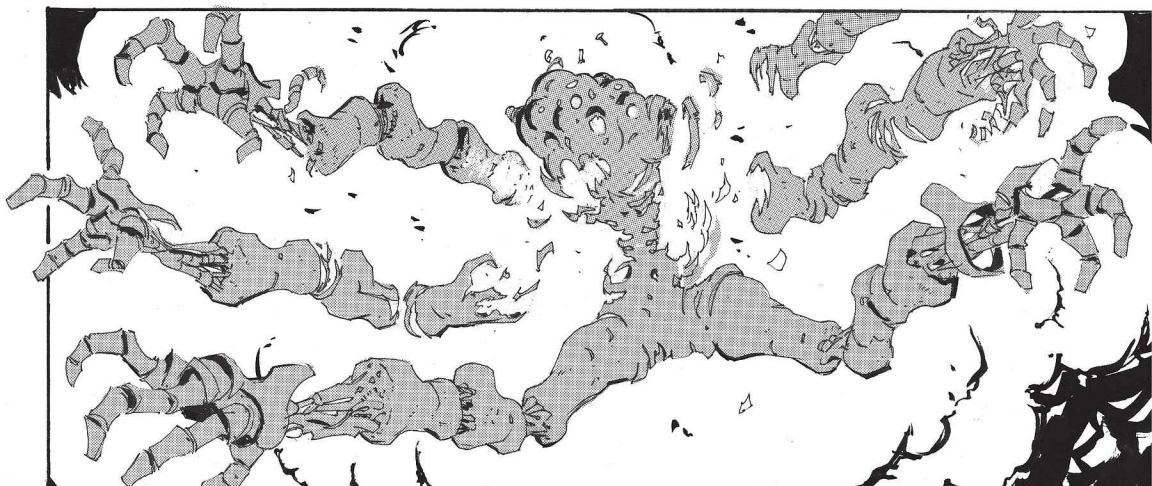
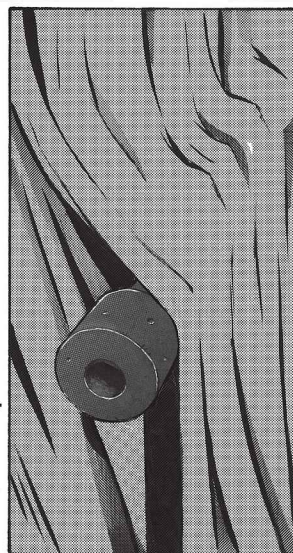
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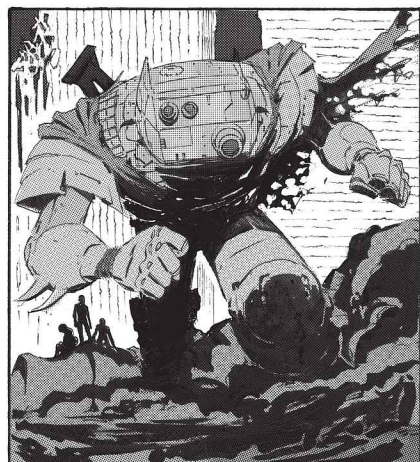
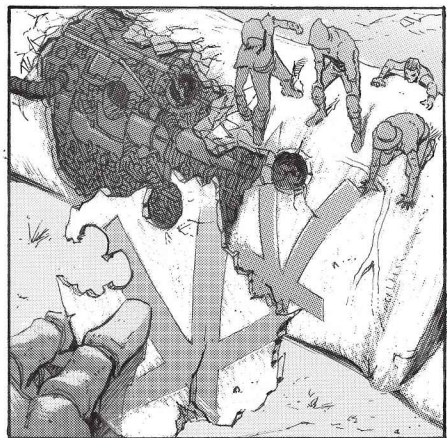
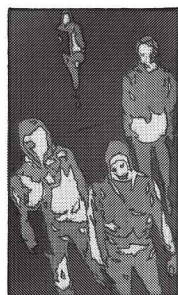
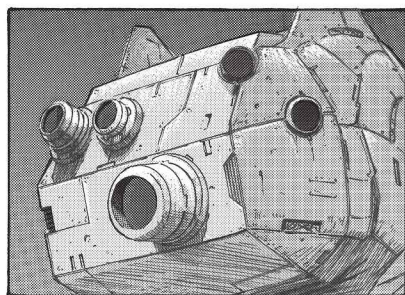
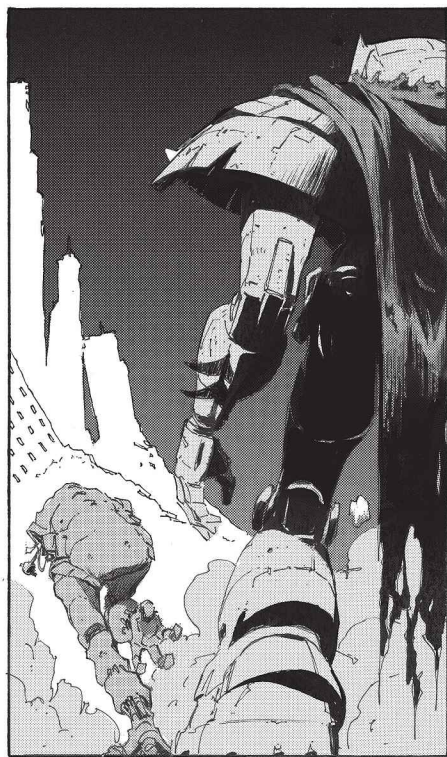
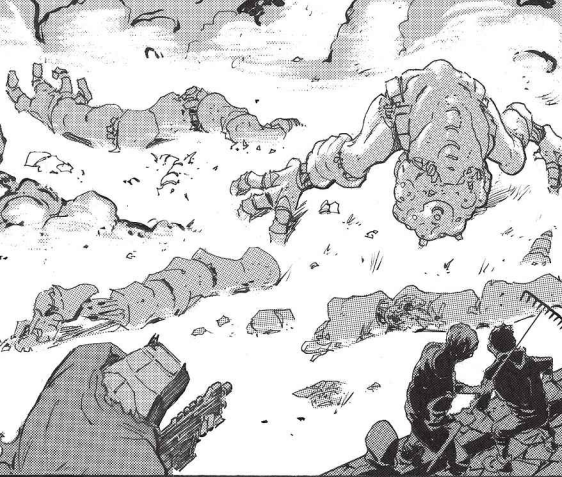


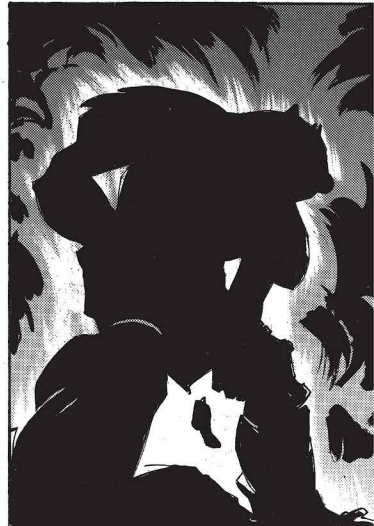
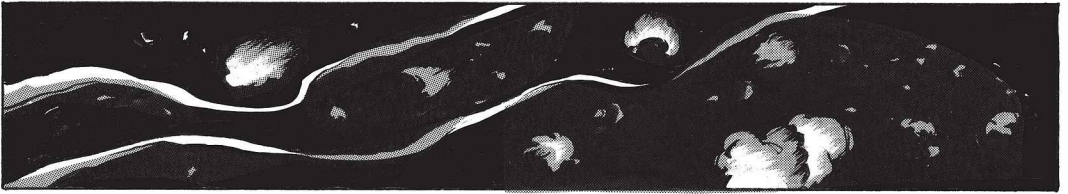
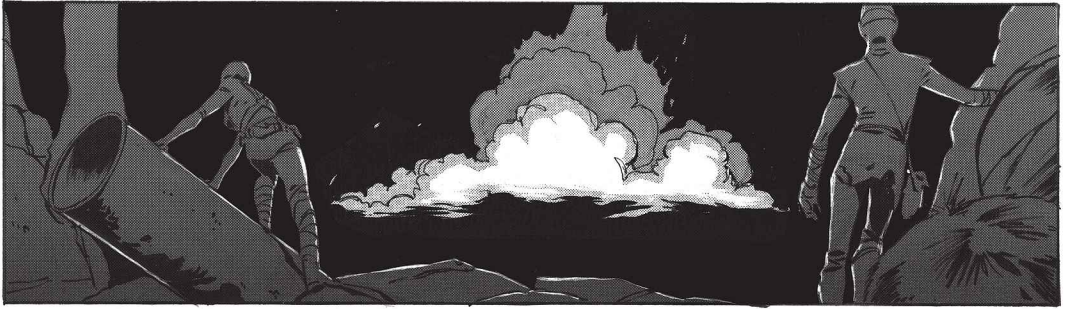
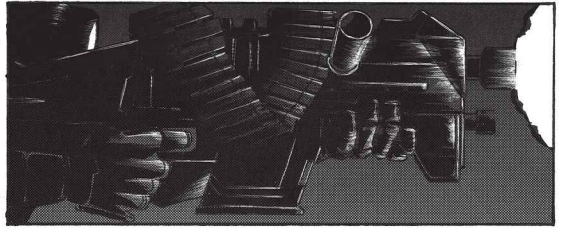
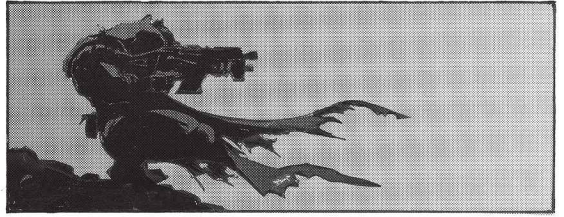
LEGION

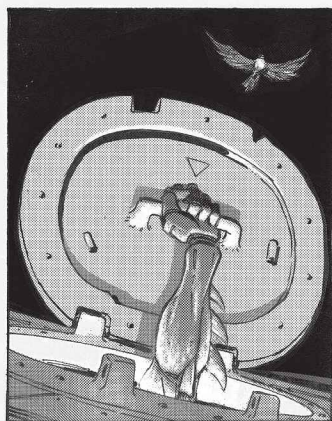
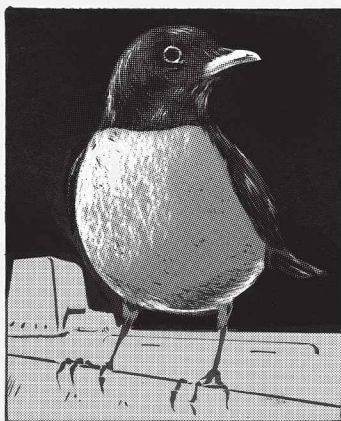


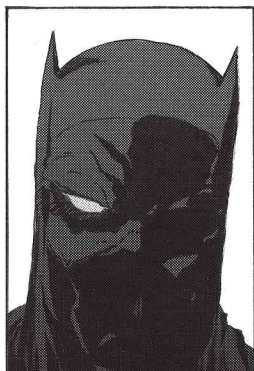
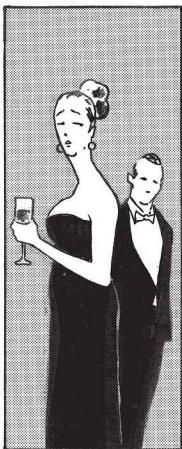
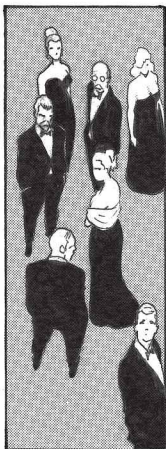
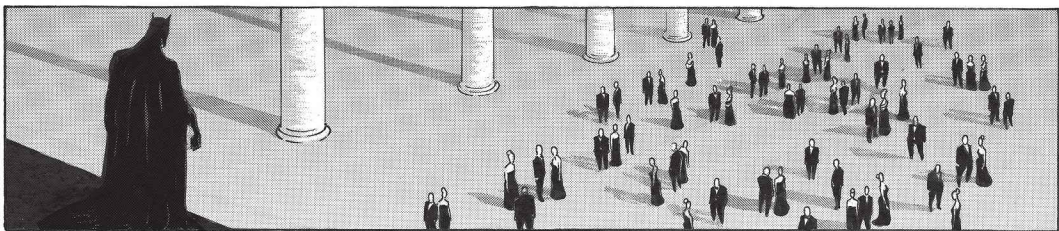
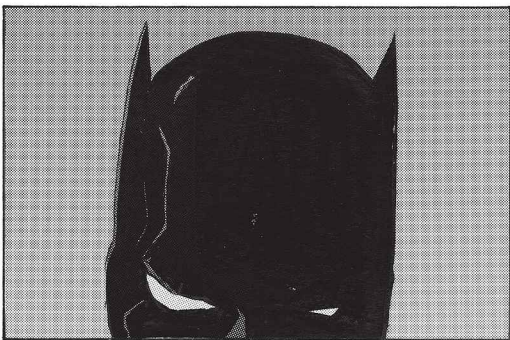
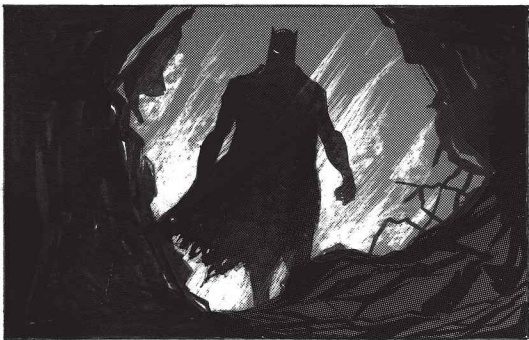














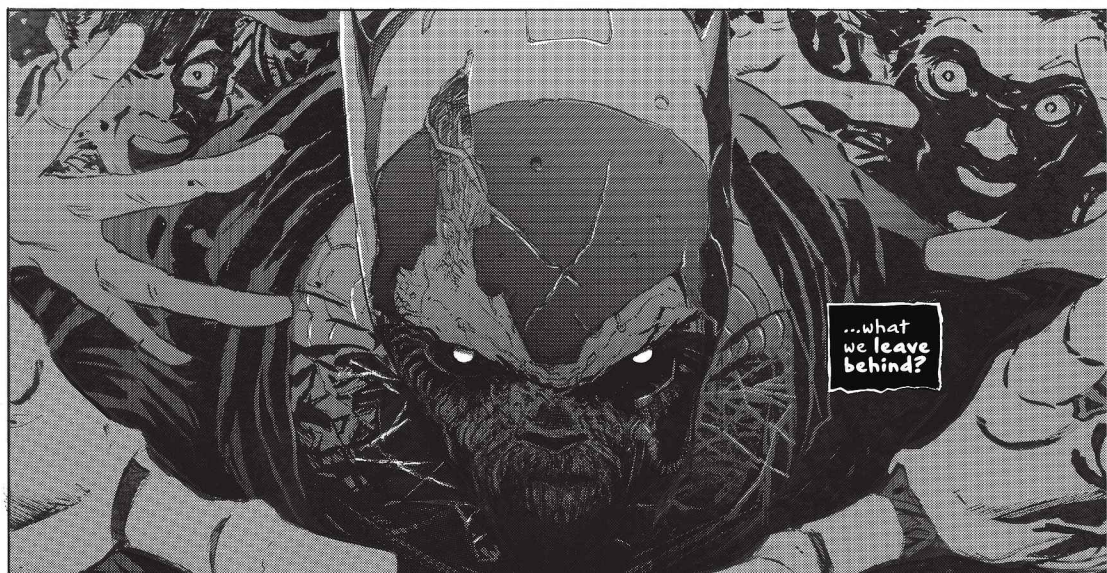
My work endures.



My legacy is not yet defined.



Is it what we achieve, or...



...what we leave behind?

A Night in the Life of a Bat in Gotham

Writer

JOSHUA WILLIAMSON

Artist

RILEY ROSSMO

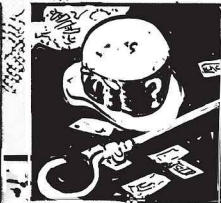
Letters

DERON BENNETT

Editors

**BEN ABERNATHY &
DAVE WIELGOSZ**







HATE
LOSING A LOYAL
CUSTOMER...

MICHAEL
LUCIGUS

...BUT THAT
COUPLE TRIED
TO STIFF ME ON
THE RIDDLER
MERCH...

HH?

OH NOW,
LOOK WHO'S
DECIDED TO
JOIN US.

HSSSSS!

YOU'RE GONNA
FETCH ME A
PRETTY PENNY,
DARLING.

ALL THIS
OTHER VILLAIN
JUNK WE CAN
ONLY SELL
ONCE.

BUT THERE'S
A LOT OF YOU
FLYING RODENTS
FLYING AROUND, AIN'T
THERE? AND A LOT OF
CUSTOMERS WHO
WANT TO TAKE
YOU HOME.









THERE
HE IS. ALL
BETTER.

JUST A
LITTLE SHOCK
FOR MY
HERO.

OF COURSE
THE ELITES OF
GOTHAM WOULD
TRY TO KEEP BATS
AS PETS AS SOME
KIND OF STATUS
THING.

IS THAT
A DIG ON
MY FATHER,
GRAYSON?

BATS CAN'T
BE KEPT IN
CAPTIVITY FOR
LONG OR
THEY DIE.

THAT BAT
HUNTER MUST
HAVE KNOWN
AND JUST NOT
CARED.

WHICH IS
WHY WE LET
THE BATS COME
AND GO AS
THEY PLEASE,
BARBARA...

IT'S IMPORTANT
THEY LIVE WITH
THEIR COLONY.

DO YOU
EVER WISH YOU
COULD TALK TO
YOUR PETS,
FATHER?

THEY'RE
NOT PETS,
DAMIAN...

AND OF COURSE
BECAUSE I KNOW
EVERY SINGLE BAT
IN THIS CAVE...

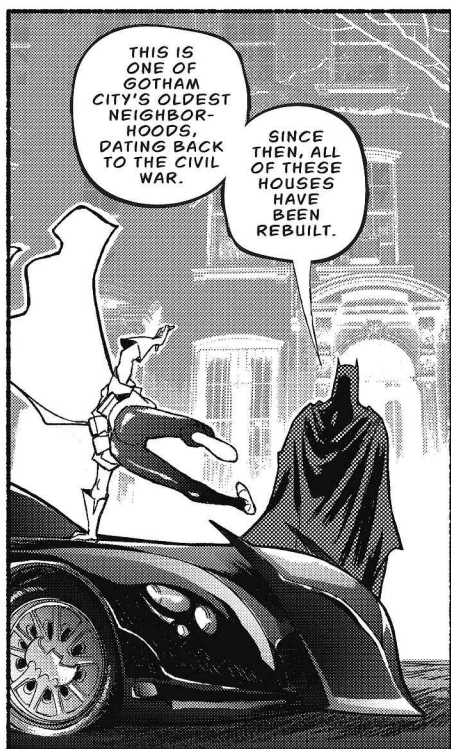
...AND IN
GOTHAM...

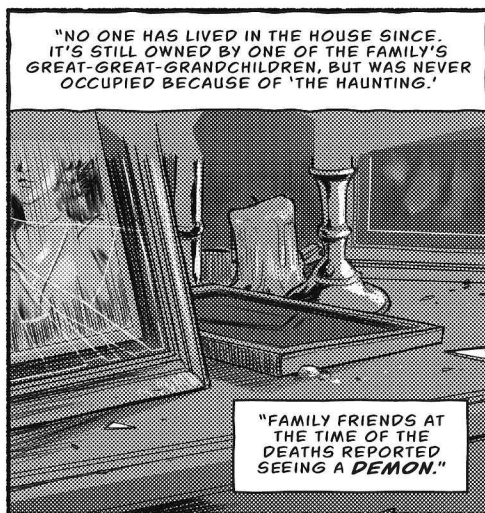
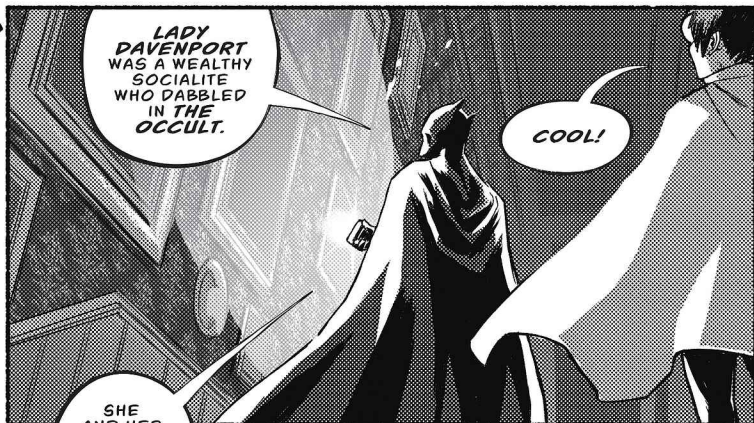
...THEY'RE
FAMILY.

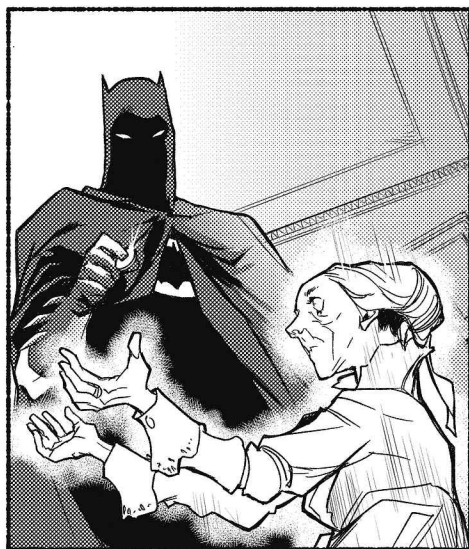
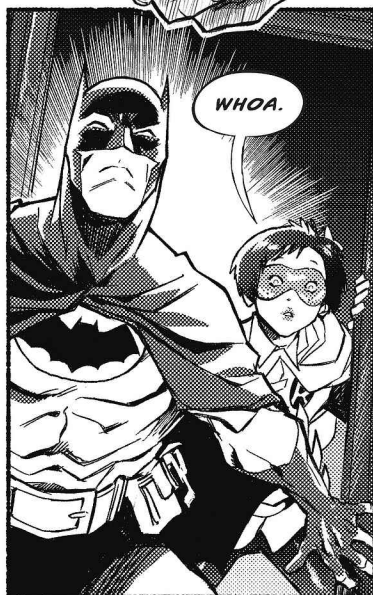


...HAS
THEIR OWN
STORY TO
TELL.

The End.









I...
...I DID IT.



SPIRIT OF GOTHAM...

...YOU'VE COME.



KAY DAVENPORT.



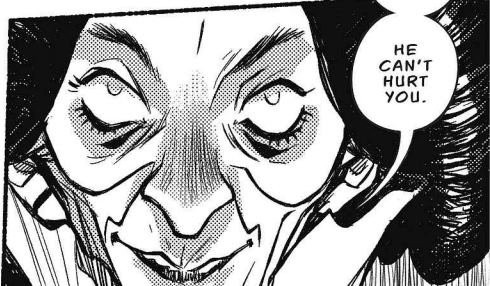
GOOD GOD.

IT KNOWS US!

KAY, I INSIST YOU CEASE THIS DEVILRY AT ONCE!

DON'T BREAK THE CIRCLE, BILL!

DON'T YOU DARE.



HE CAN'T HURT YOU.

WE BIND
YOU TO US,
SPIRIT OF
GOTHAM...

ROBIN...

FROM
LEFT,
FROM
RIGHT...

IF YOU
CAN HEAR
THIS,
REPORT...

BY DAY,
BY NIGHT...

TELL US
TRUE...

WHERE IS
OUR LOST LAMB,
GONE SIX DAYS
AGO?

WHERE IS
MY GRAND-
DAUGHTER?

DOLLY
DAVENPORT.

FOURTEEN
YEARS OLD.

"HER BODY WAS NEVER FOUND."

HOW?

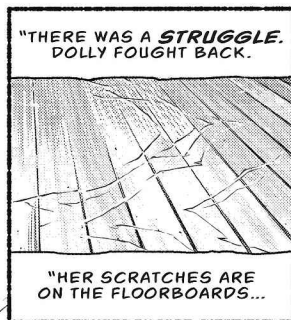
TELL ME
HOW SHE
DIED!

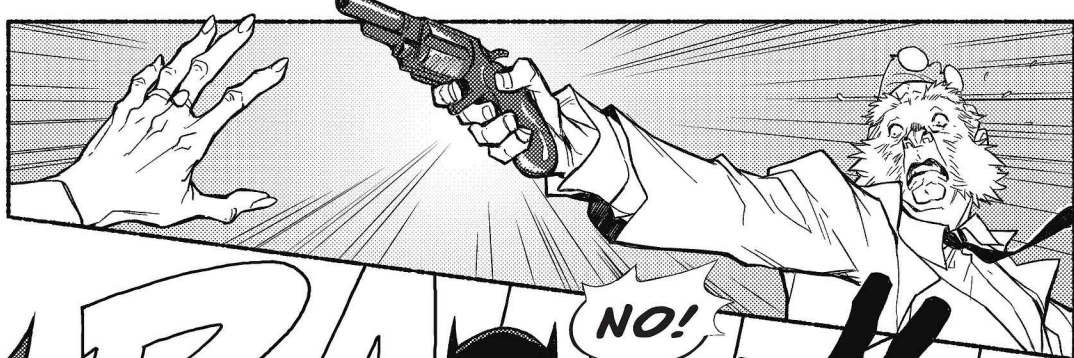
NOW,
KAY,
CALM
DOWN--

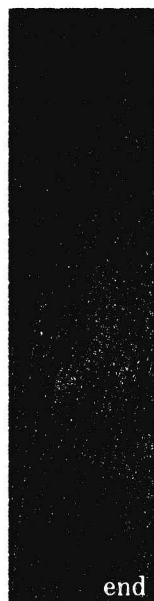
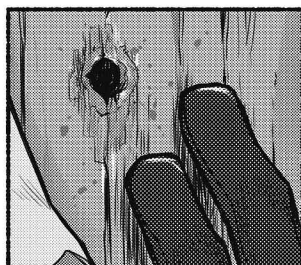
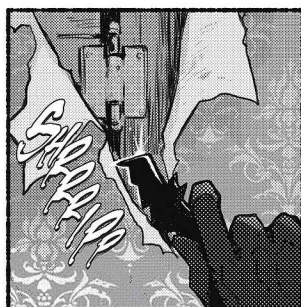
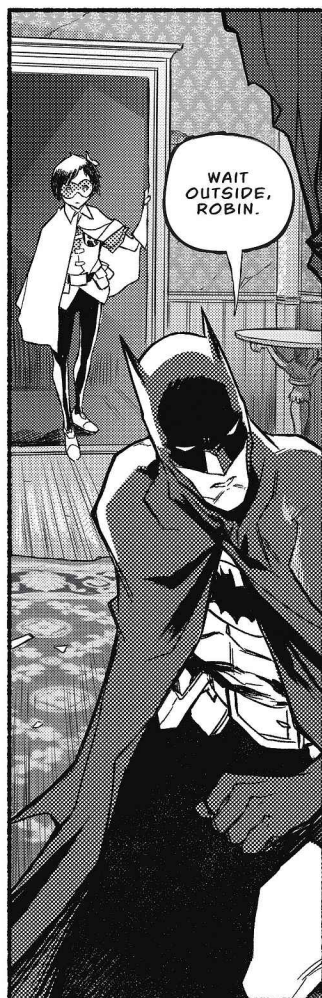
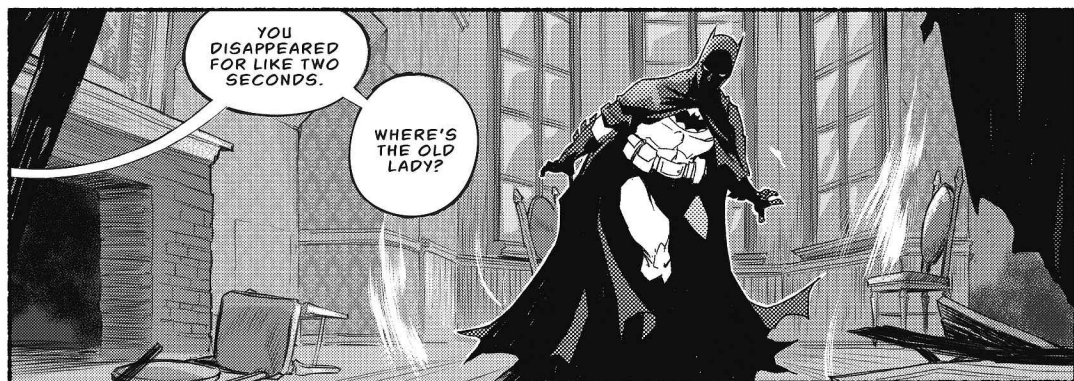
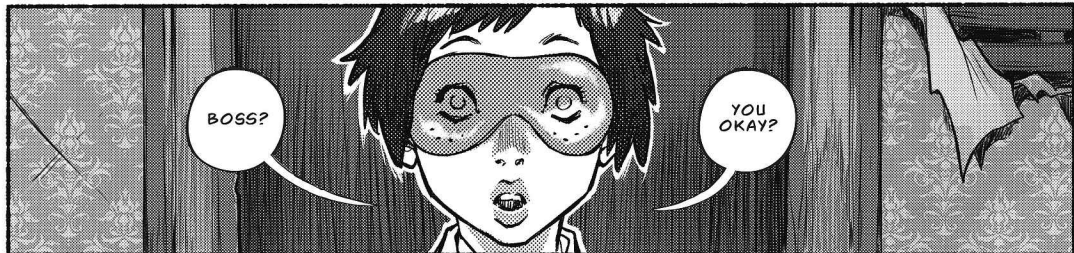
HE KNOWS, GRAEME!
HE KNOWS EVERYTHING
THAT HAPPENS IN
THIS CITY!

DON'T YOU,
DEMON?









end



The Green Deal

CHIP ZDARSKY Writer
NICK BRADSHAW Artist
ADITYA BIDIKAR Letters
BEN ABERNATHY &
DAVE WIELGOSZ Editors



A black and white comic book panel showing Batman standing in a Gotham street. The scene is heavily overgrown with thick, gnarled vines that climb up the buildings and trees. In the background, a large, monstrous, vine-covered creature with a skeletal face and multiple limbs is visible. Batman is in the foreground, looking towards the creature.

...ISN'T
HERE.

A close-up black and white panel of a monstrous creature made of vines. It has a large, skeletal face with multiple eyes and a wide, toothy mouth. It is wearing a small, dark, pointed hat. The creature is looking down with a menacing expression.

I AM.

A black and white panel showing a large vine creature with a skeletal face and multiple limbs. It is in the process of throwing Batman. Batman is in mid-air, having been launched from the creature's grasp. The creature is looking down at him with a determined expression.

STAY OUT
OF THIS,
BATMAN!

YOU'VE
BEEN
HARRASSING
WAYNE FOR
WEEKS...

KRKRKRAK

A black and white panel showing Batman landing in a vine-covered area. He is in a crouched position, looking up at the vine-covered creature. The creature is looking down at him with a determined expression.

...AND NOW THIS?
DIGGING UP HIS
PARENTS?

YOU'VE GONE
TOO FAR, IVY.
WAYNE IS IN
HIDING...



...AND YOU'RE GOING BACK TO ARKHAM.



NO!

DON'T HURT THEM!
DON'T--



START TALKING THEN. WHY ARE YOU HERE?

I NEED...
I NEED WAYNE'S HELP...



THE CARBON IN THE AIR IS CHOKING THE PLANTS! THE EARTH IS DYING!

WAYNE INDUSTRIES' SHIPPING FLEET IS ALL ELECTRIC! THEIR POLICIES ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY!

WITH BRUCE WAYNE, I CAN CREATE A WORLD WHERE PLANTS AND PEOPLE CO-EXIST PEACEFULLY!



WHY DOES WAYNE NEED YOU FOR THAT?

I'VE CREATED A SUPER-PLANT...



...IT PRODUCES INCREDIBLE AMOUNTS OF OXYGEN! NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DESTROY!

I NEED HIS LABS TO HELP ME PERFECT IT! AND DISPERSE IT WORLDWIDE THROUGH THEIR PROPERTIES! ONCE IT GAINS HOLD IT'LL SPREAD THROUGH THE POPULATION!

THINK, BATMAN! IF I COULD ONLY ABANDON MY CRUSADE, I COULD FINALLY JOIN YOU...

...ON YOURS!



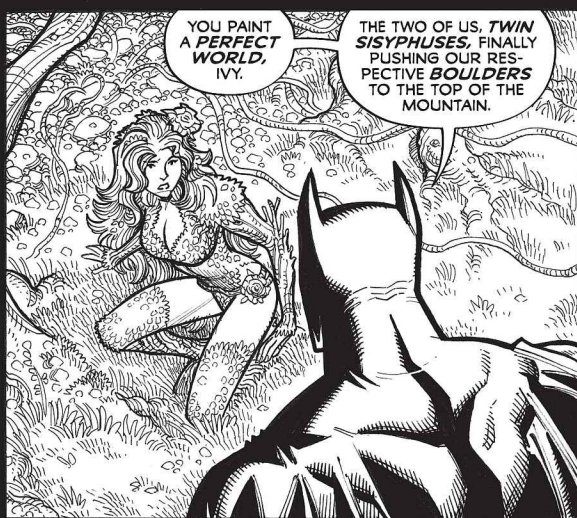
"I'M TIRED,
BATMAN..."


"TIRED OF
FIGHTING YOU,
TIRED OF FIGHTING
THE WORLD."

"IF WE CAN SAVE
ALL PLANT LIFE,
THEN I CAN LEAVE
THIS WAR WITH
HUMANITY BEHIND
AND JOIN YOU..."

"...IN FIGHTING CORPORATE
POLLUTERS...VILLAINS
WHO LOOK TO HARM THE
PLANET OR PEOPLE!"

"WE CAN BE
THE WORLD'S
FINEST TEAM."





"YOUR **PLANTS** WILL
TAKE HOLD, BUT
PEOPLE WILL STILL
BURN, WILL STILL CUT...

"...WILL STILL
TRY TO BEND
THE WORLD
TO THEIR WILL.

"AND WITH YOUR
SUPER-PLANTS
IN PLACE...YOU'LL
DESTROY THEM.

"YOU'LL PRETEND
TO CARE FOR
PEOPLE, BUT IN
YOUR WORLD..."





AAH!!

ALWAYS
ONE STEP...STEP
AHEAD...

THE
BATMAN
WITH THE
BAT-PLAN...

BUT...
WHAT ABOUT
THE WORLD,
BATMAN?

I'M GIVING
YOU THE PLAN
TO SAVE THE
WORLD!

IVY...

...WHAT
MAKES YOU
THINK I DON'T
ALREADY HAVE
ONE?

The End.

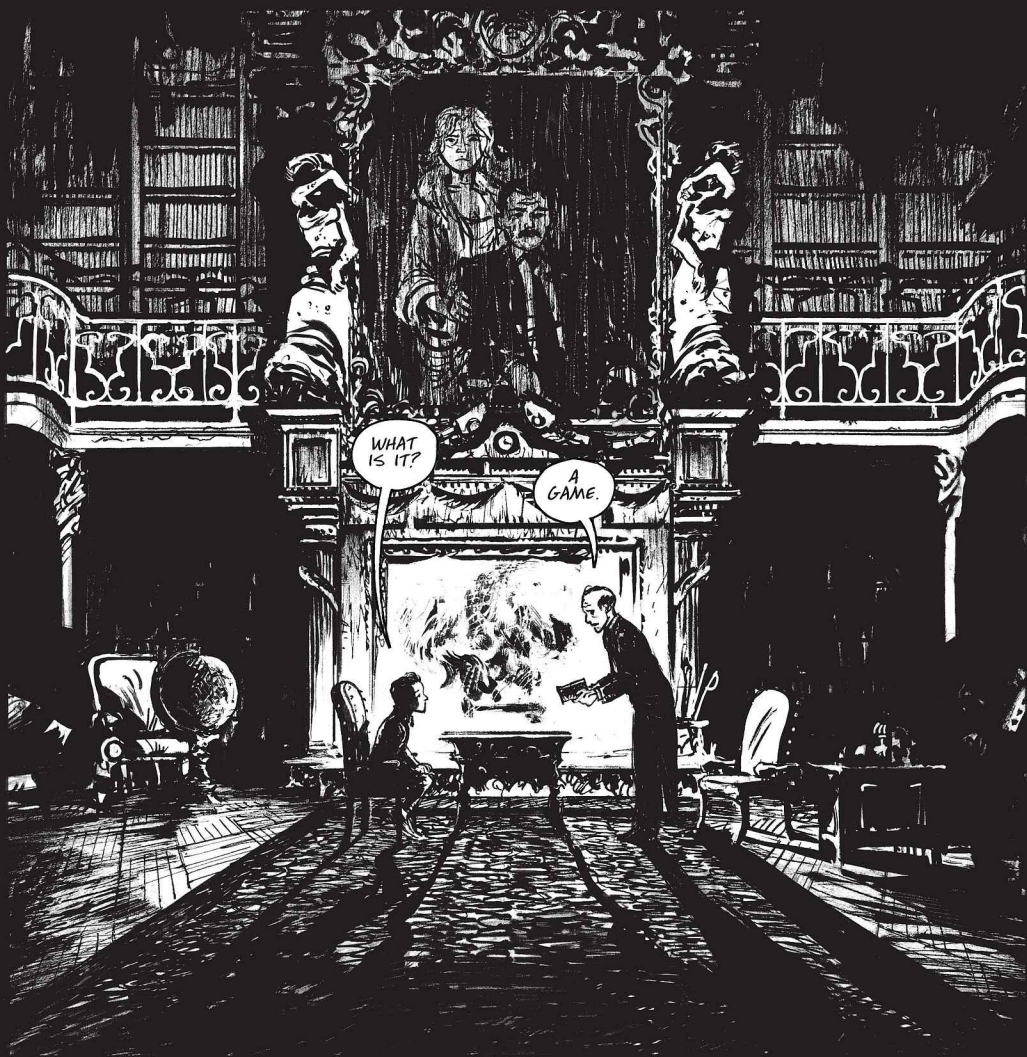


CHECKMATE

DANIEL WARREN JOHNSON: STORY & ART
RUS WOOTON: LETTERER | ANDY KHOURI: EDITOR

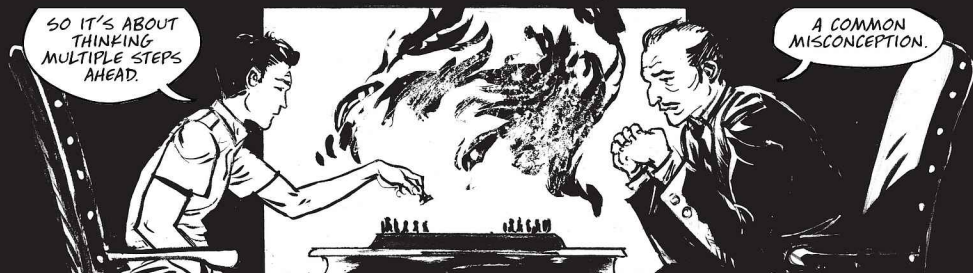








I ENCOURAGE YOU, MASTER BRUCE, TO NOT THINK OF THIS GAME IN TERMS OF STRENGTH, BUT IN WITS.



SO IT'S ABOUT THINKING MULTIPLE STEPS AHEAD.

A COMMON MISCONCEPTION.



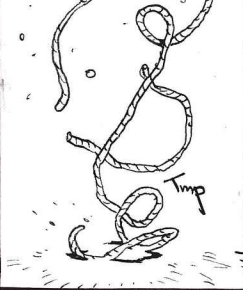
IN THIS CONTEST, THERE ARE TOO MANY VARIABLES TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF EVERY MOVEMENT.



HOW CAN THE GAME BE MASTERED THEN?



"MASTERY COMES FROM MEMORIZING THE MANY DIFFERENT SITUATIONS YOU COULD BE IN..."



...AND
BEING
PREPARED
FOR EACH
ONE.

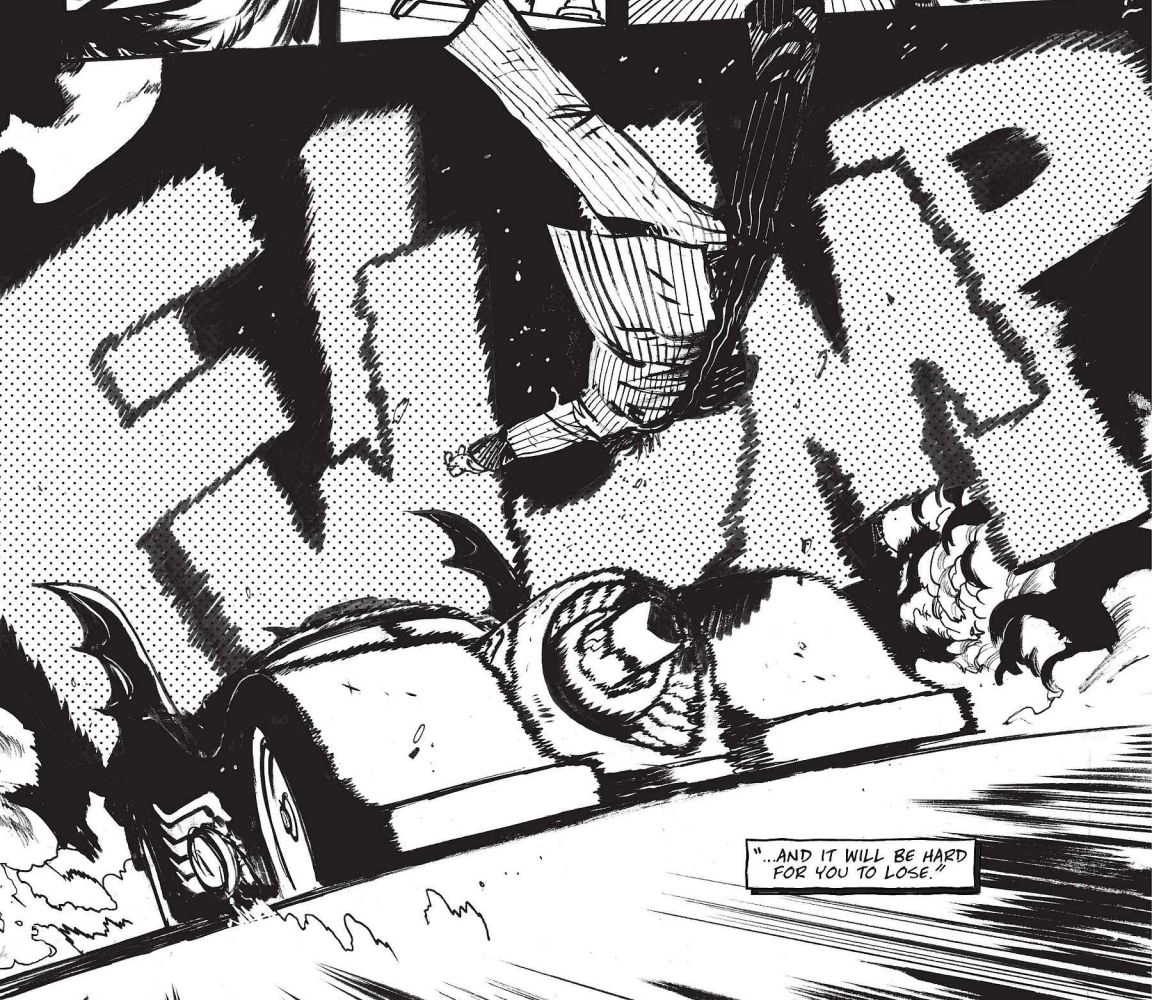




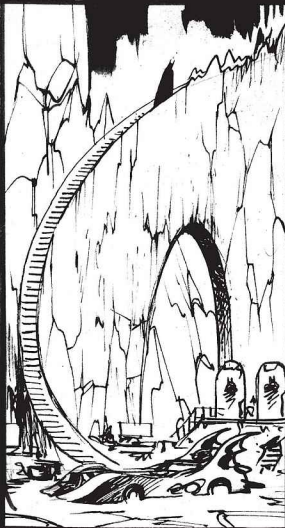
"BUT IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO HAVE A
SOLID STRATEGY OF YOUR OWN."



YOU MUST
LEARN THE
STRATEGY
OF YOUR
OPPONENT:
HOW THEY
THINK, THEIR
HABITS, THEIR
NATURE. DO
THIS...



"...AND IT WILL BE HARD
FOR YOU TO LOSE."



END on 10/20

C.C. HALY AND
NORTON BROS.
CIRCUS, MADAME
FORTUNA'S TENT.

A LONG TIME AGO,
BUT IT FEELS LIKE
YESTERDAY.



ARE YOU
SURE SHE WAS
MURDERED?



THERE'S NO PRINTS, NOTHING
WAS STOLEN, NO
SIGNS OF A
STRUGGLE...

BESIDES
THE OBVIOUS
KNIFE IN HER
CHEST.

THEN
WHY DO
YOU NEED
ME?



IT JUST
FELT LIKE YOUR
TERRITORY.







"WHERE'D YOU GO?"

THE NEXT CARD, STRENGTH. OF COURSE SAMSON IS A STRONGMAN. DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE WANTS TO TALK.

THE HELL DO YOU WANT? I ALREADY TOLD THE COP--I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, SO JUST LEAVE ME THE HELL ALONE.

I'M NOT THE COPS. WHY DID MADAME FORTUNA BREAK OFF YOUR ENGAGEMENT?



ARTIE TOLD YOU, DID HE? I KEPT OUR BREAKUP A SECRET BECAUSE I WAS SURE SHE'D TAKE ME BACK.

WE WERE SO HAPPY TOGETHER...



"BINARY STARS," SHE CALLED US. SAID WE WERE BOUND TOGETHER BY FATE...



...BUT SHE LEFT WITHOUT EVEN TELLING ME WHY!

WE WERE IN LOVE, AND NOW I'LL NEVER KNOW...



LEAVE ME ALONE. I GOT NOTHIN' ELSE TO SAY.

HE'S GOT A TEMPER, AND THAT'S NOT THE FIRST TIME IT'S FLARED UP.



TELLS ME EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW WITHOUT SAYING A WORD.

LET'S FIND OUT WHY HE RIPPED THE FLYING GRAYSONS POSTER IN HALF.



MR. HALY.
THE RINGMASTER.

...THE EMPEROR.

SO IT'S
MY TURN,
EH?
GUESS
THAT MEANS
YOU'VE TALKED
TO EVERYONE
ELSE.

ALL
THAT'S LEFT
IS FOR YOU TO
CONFESS.

I KNOW
ABOUT THE
ARGUMENT
YOU HAD WITH
FORTUNA.

YEAH?
WHAT
ABOUT
IT?

SHE WAS BOSSY.
ALL RIGHT. ALWAYS
TELLING ME HOW I
SHOULD RUN MY
BUSINESS!

WE GOT
HEATED THIS
MORNING WHEN SHE
TRIED TO WARN ME
ABOUT MY NEW, AH,
BUSINESS PARTNER,
ZUCCO.

I KNOW HIS
PROTECTION IS
A RACKET, BUT I
TELL HER, THERE'S
NOTHING I CAN
DO! HE'S GOT ME
UP AGAINST
A WALL.

SHE
THREATENED
TO CALL THE
POLICE. I DIDN'T
WANT THAT
GETTING
B-BACK TO
ZUCCO...

...SO
I FIRED
HER.

I WAS
JUST TRYING
TO PROTECT
HER, YOU KNOW?
BUT SHE TOOK
IT REALLY
HARD.

BUT
WHAT WAS
I SUPPOSED
TO DO?



THAT JUST
LEAVES THE TWO
OF SWORDS.



SO...
WHO DID
IT?




YOU'RE
NOT GOING
TO LIKE THIS,
GORDON...

...NONE
OF THEM.

WHAT?
YOU MEAN--

SUICIDE.
IT WAS IN THE
CARDS.




SHE LEFT A
BLOOD STAIN ON
EVERY ONE, EACH
COVERING A SINGLE
LETTER. OR, IN THE
CASE OF THE TWO
OF SWORDS,
A SHAPE.

REARRANGED,
THE LETTERS SPELL
OUT ONE WORD.

S-O-R-R...

"SORRY."
WELL, I'LL BE
DAMNED.



HOW LONG DID
IT TAKE YOU TO
FIGURE *THAT*
ONE OUT?

WAIT,
DON'T TELL
ME--YOU KNEW ALL
ALONG. WHY THE
SONG AND
DANCE?

I WANTED
TO GET THE FULL
STORY.



IT'S JUST...
DISAPPOINTING.
I'M NOT SAYING IT'D
HAVE BEEN *BETTER*
IF SHE'D BEEN
MURDERED--

FORTUNA WAS IN A
TOXIC RELATIONSHIP
AND HAD JUST LOST HER
JOB. SHE FELT *ALONE.*
IT'S ALL THERE.

--BUT AT
LEAST THEN WE
COULD GIVE PEOPLE
SOME ANSWERS,
HOLD SOMEONE
ACCOUNTABLE.

AND
WHAT WOULD
THAT CHANGE?
YOU CAN'T REPLACE
GRIEF WITH ANGER.
BELIEVE ME, I'VE
TRIED.



YOU SHOULD KNOW
THIS BY NOW.

SOMETIMES THERE ARE NO
ANSWERS. AND THE ONES YOU
DO MANAGE TO FIND...?

THEY WILL NEVER
SATISFY YOU.

THE FOOL'S JOURNEY

BECKY CLOONAN • WRITER
TERRY DODSON • PENCILS
RACHEL DODSON • INKS
BECCA CAREY • LETTERS
BEN ABERNATHY AND
DAVE WIELGOSZ • EDITORS

END.

SOMEWHERE IN
GOTHAM CITY...

I KNOW THE LEAGUE OF
ASSASSINS DIDN'T PRIDE
THEMSELVES ON BIKE RIDING,
BUT YOU NEED TO CATCH UP,
DAMIAN. WE CAN'T WAIT.

WATCH YOURSELF,
OLD MAN. YOU MAY BE
BETTER WITH A BICYCLE
BUT I'M YOUR SUPERIOR
AT EVERYTHING ELSE.

ENOUGH.
WE'RE AT THE
SPOT.

ACCORDING TO
MY INFORMATION,
THE DELIVERY WILL
HAPPEN HERE
TONIGHT.

WELL, IT'S NOT
TONIGHT RIGHT NOW.
SO WHY ARE WE HERE
SO EARLY?

FATHER & SON OUTING

JORGE
JIMENEZ
Writer &
Artist

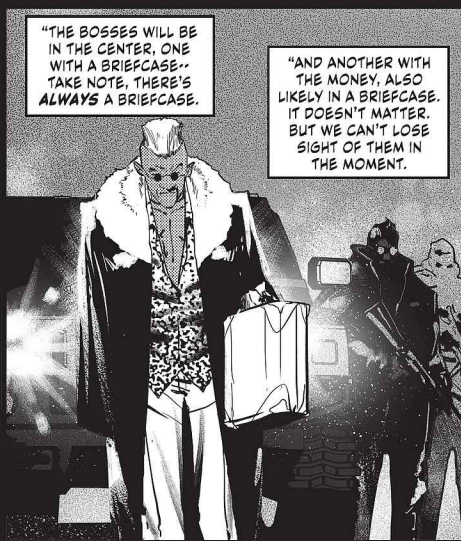


"LIKE I WAS SAYING. THEY'LL ARRIVE AT MIDNIGHT. WE'LL BE HERE WELL BEFORE THEY ARE. THEY USUALLY COME IN TWO CARS. SOMETIMES THEY BRING REINFORCEMENTS, WHICH COULD COME FROM **OPPOSITE** DIRECTIONS.



THE DELIVERY WILL BE RIGHT THERE.

WE NEED TO FIND POSITIONS WHERE WE'LL BE ABLE TO SEE THAT AREA **CLEARLY**.



"THE BOSSES WILL BE IN THE CENTER, ONE WITH A BRIEFCASE-- TAKE NOTE, THERE'S ALWAYS A BRIEFCASE.

"AND ANOTHER WITH THE MONEY, ALSO LIKELY IN A BRIEFCASE. IT DOESN'T MATTER. BUT WE CAN'T LOSE SIGHT OF THEM IN THE MOMENT.



THE TREE BEHIND THE STREETLIGHT WILL BE YOUR POSITION. WHEN I SIGNAL YOU, MAKE A LITTLE NOISE...



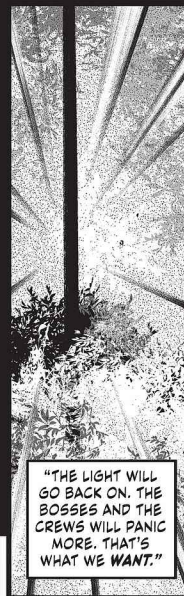
"THIS WILL ALERT THEM, BUT NOT TOO MUCH.

"THEY'LL SUSPECT IT'S BATMAN INSTANTLY AND START **UNRAVELING**.



"THEY'LL SEND SOME OF THEIR CREW IN YOUR DIRECTION THEY'LL BE NERVOUS, AND I'LL KILL THE LIGHT.

"THEN YOU'RE UP, DAMIAN. TAKE THEM OUT, AND DON'T GIVE THEM TIME TO SHOOT.



"THE LIGHT WILL GO BACK ON. THE BOSSES AND THE CREWS WILL PANIC MORE. THAT'S WHAT WE WANT."

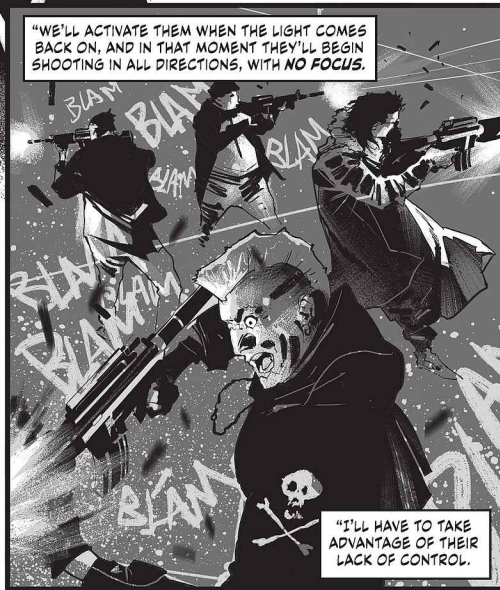




GO OVER THERE AND PLACE TWO MINI-EXPLOSIVES. RIGHT ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF WHERE THEY'LL BE FOCUSING.



...OKAY!



"WE'LL ACTIVATE THEM WHEN THE LIGHT COMES BACK ON, AND IN THAT MOMENT THEY'LL BEGIN SHOOTING IN ALL DIRECTIONS, WITH **NO FOCUS**."

"I'LL HAVE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR LACK OF CONTROL."



I NEED TO FIND THE RIGHT POINT TO DESCEND FROM. BATMAN'S ENTRANCE IS IMPORTANT.



FATHER...THIS IS ALL **STUPID**. AGAIN, I INSIST WE JUST ARRIVE AND BEAT THEM DOWN.

WHY DON'T WE JUST KEEP THIS **SIMPLE**?





"BECAUSE I'M
BATMAN..."

"THEY'LL HEAR ME
SHOUT AND MY
VOICE WILL SPREAD
FEAR AMONG THEM."

"THEY'LL KNOW THAT
THEY CAN'T DEFEAT ME,
THAT THEY CAN'T KILL ME."

"THEIR ONLY
COURSE OF ACTION
WILL BE TO *RUN*."



CONCENTRATION
WILL BE THE
KEY HERE.



EVERYTHING WILL
MOVE VERY FAST,
SO YOU'LL HAVE
TO BE VERY
EFFECTIVE.



"FIRM STRIKE,
QUICK!"

"AND THEN DON'T
HESITATE, *STRIKE AGAIN!*"



SAY IT
WITH ME.

FIRM STRIKE,
QUICK!

RIGHT...AND THEN
DON'T HESITATE,
STRIKE AGAIN!



"NO ONE SHOULD
ESCAPE."



THE LIGHT AND THE
NEARBY WALLS ARE
GOING TO BE ESSENTIAL
IN THIS BATTLE.

"THE GUNSHOTS GOING OFF WILL
BE LIKE CAMERA FLASHES. THEY'LL
MAKE MY SILHOUETTE LOOK
TERRIFYING AGAINST THE WALL."

"THEY WON'T BE
THINKING RATIONALLY
AT THIS POINT."

"WITH ADRENALINE LEVELS
SO HIGH, THEY WON'T BE
ABLE TO DISTINGUISH WHAT'S
REAL FROM WHAT ISN'T."





"BY NATURE, CRIMINALS ARE..."

I KNOW, I KNOW.
"A COWARDLY AND
SUPERSTITIOUS LOT."



HMPH...
CORRECT...



"TO THEM I'LL
NO LONGER BE
A MAN..."

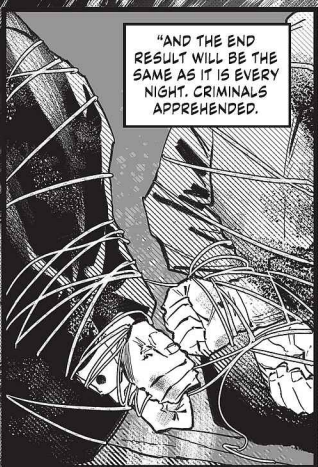


"I WILL BE FEAR
INCARNATE."



"THEY'LL SEE ME
AS A DEMON THAT
PURSUES THEM
WITHOUT MERCY."

"THEY'LL TRY TO
ESCAPE WITHOUT
MUCH SUCCESS."



"AND THE END
RESULT WILL BE THE
SAME AS IT IS EVERY
NIGHT. CRIMINALS
APPREHENDED."



UNDERSTOOD?

UNDERSTOOD.

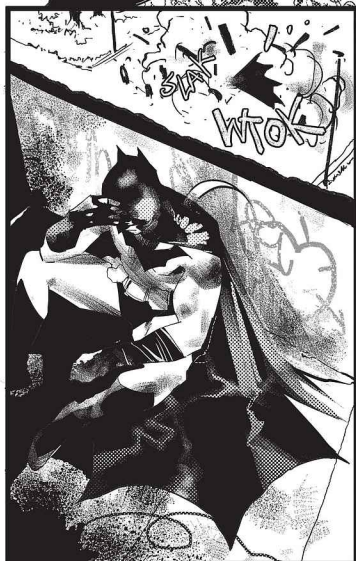
GOOD. LET'S
GET BACK TO THE
MANOR AND REST
FOR LATER.

LATER THAT NIGHT...

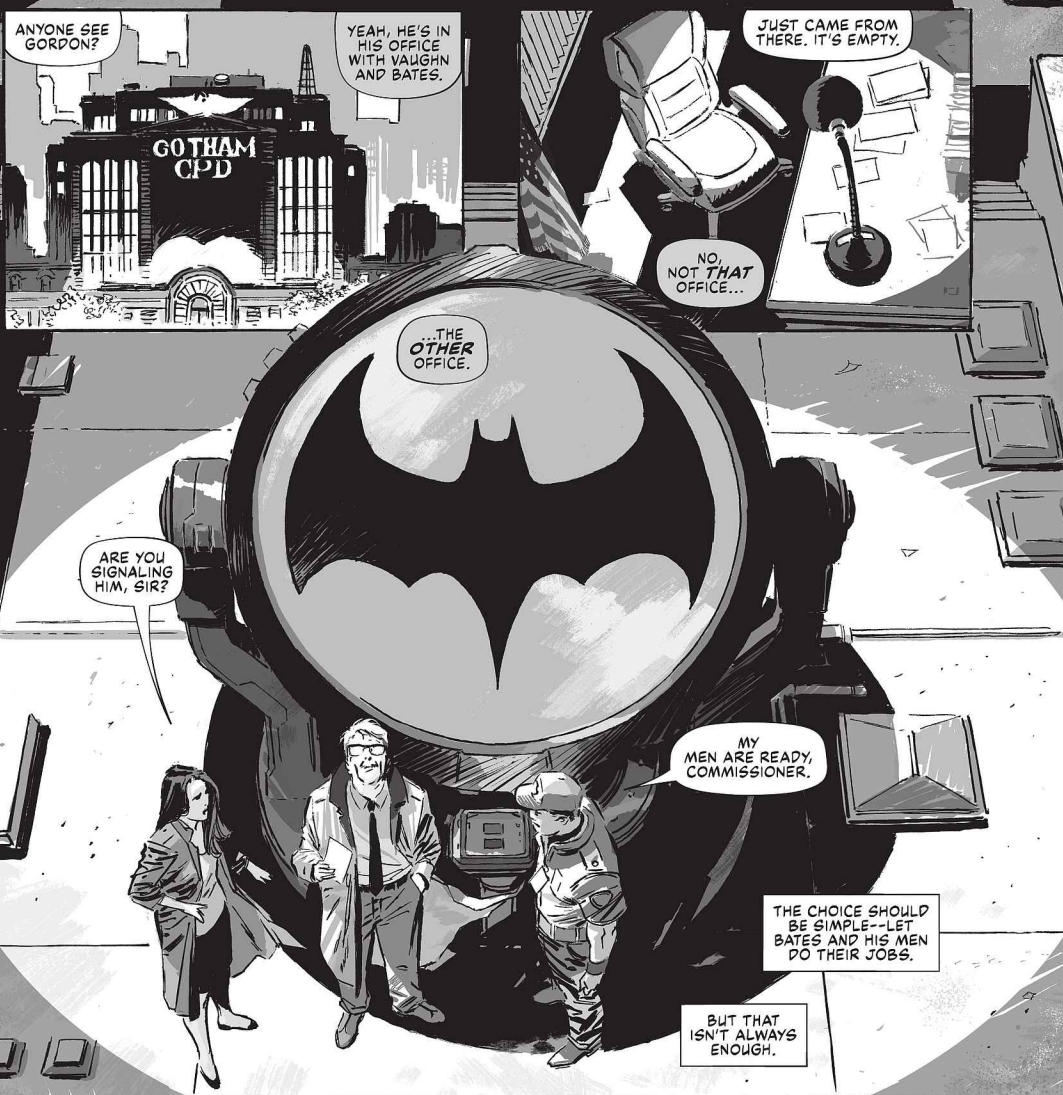
"ARRIVING RIGHT ON TIME."

"ARE WE GOING NOW?"





END



ANYONE SEE GORDON?

YEAH, HE'S IN HIS OFFICE WITH VAUGHN AND BATES.

JUST CAME FROM THERE. IT'S EMPTY.

NO, NOT THAT OFFICE...

...THE OTHER OFFICE.

ARE YOU SIGNALING HIM, SIR?

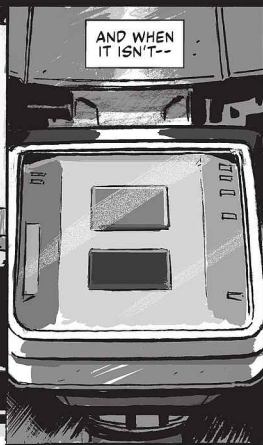
MY MEN ARE READY, COMMISSIONER.

THE CHOICE SHOULD BE SIMPLE--LET BATES AND HIS MEN DO THEIR JOBS.

BUT THAT ISN'T ALWAYS ENOUGH.



WHERE IS BALL ROAD, SIR?



AND WHEN IT ISN'T--



CRIMINALS MAY NOT RESPECT THE LAW...

...BUT THEY
FEAR HIM.

SIGNALS

LEE WEEKS writer/artist

CLAYTON COWLES letterer

DAVE WIELGOSZ editor

STILL, HAVE WE RELIED
ON THAT FEAR--ON
BATMAN--TOO MUCH?
LIKE AN OVERUSED DRUG
THAT WEAKENS A BODY'S
OWN DEFENSES?

GOOTHAM'S A SICK
CITY INFECTED
WITH SOME BAD
MEN--SOME WHO
EVEN WEAR THE
UNIFORM.

COMMISSIONER?

SIMPLE
WON'T
DO THIS
TIME.

THAT
LEAVES
FEAR.

OR DOES
IT?





THIS HAS WAITED THIRTY YEARS.
IT'LL KEEP ONE MORE NIGHT.

THAT'S WHAT
I TELL *HER*.

I THINK ABOUT A ROOKIE AND
HIS MENTOR. OF MANY LESSONS
IMPARTED TO THE ROOKIE, NONE
AS POWERFUL AS THE MENTOR'S
LAST--ONE IN BETRAYAL.

A SHOOTOUT, AN
EXPLOSION, AND
THREE DEAD COPS--
TWO GOOD COPS--
AND THE MENTOR.

BUT THAT WAS A
PRE-DNA WORLD--
I'VE HAD MY
DOUBTS.



IT'S BEEN *THIRTY*
YEARS. IT WAS
YESTERDAY.



I SHOULD
THROW THE
SWITCH.



I SHOULD
GO HOME.



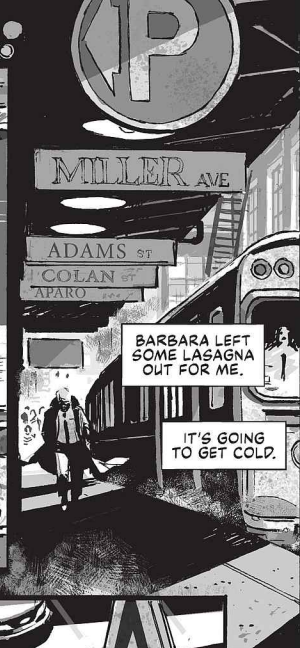


BATES, WHERE'S GORDON?

GONE FOR THE NIGHT--



"--SLIPPED OUT AN HOUR AGO."



BARBARA LEFT SOME LASAGNA OUT FOR ME.

IT'S GOING TO GET COLD.



THAT DETECTIVE IS GOOD, AND THE FILES ARE ALL THERE.

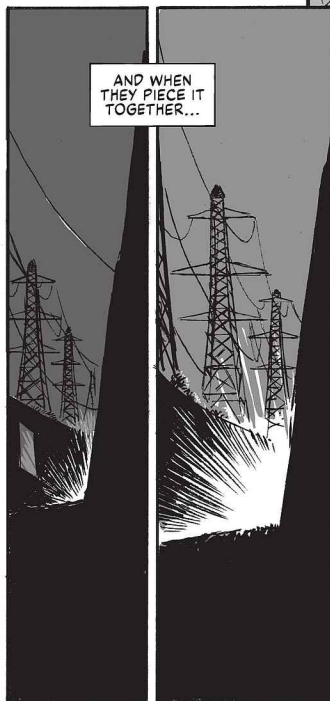
ALONG WITH THE OTHER NOTES RECEIVED THE LAST COUPLE DAYS.

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY FIGURE IT OUT.



NOT "BALL RD." BALLARD.

BALLARD INDUSTRIES--ISN'T THAT WHERE--?



AND WHEN THEY PIECE IT TOGETHER...



...THEN THEY'LL REALIZE....



...I WAS NEVER GOING HOME.



THIRTY YEARS.

SIMPLE WON'T DO THIS TIME.

NEITHER WILL CAPES.

I HAVE TO DO THIS.



I LOOKED UP TO YOU.

YOU MADE THAT EASY TO DO.

BUT CORRUPTION BEGINS SMALL--

--A SINGLE LIE THE SEED.

--SELF-DECEPTION THE DOORWAY--

--BELIEVING VIRTUE CAN BE TURNED ON AND OFF LIKE A FAUCET.



IT CAN'T.

HOW MANY CHANCES TO TURN BACK CAN YOU IGNORE--?

HOW MANY CALLS OF THE CONSCIENCE CAN YOU SHUT DOWN... BEFORE--?



THE BRIBES,
THE NARCOTICS--

AND A ROOKIE
TOO NAIVE TO
SEE IT ALL--



--UNTIL IT
WAS TOO
LATE.

I WAS
OFF-DUTY
THAT DAY.

YOU NEEDED
ME OFF THAT DAY.



NOW A SCAB HAS
BEEN RIPPED AWAY--
AN ANCIENT WOUND
REOPENED.



I TASTE ITS
BITTERNESS.

--



--THIRTY
YEARS--





Jimmy-





FIND
WHAT YOU
CAME HERE
FOR?



NO...
...BUT I
FOUND WHAT I
NEEDED.



YOU
COULD'VE
SIGNALLED.



YEAH...
I COULD
HAVE.
BUT I
KNEW SOMEONE
ELSE WOULD.



A GOOD
DETECTIVE.

I CAME LOOKING
FOR VENGEANCE.

INSTEAD,
I FOUND...
MERCY.

END





SMILE
MR. AND MRS.
DENT!

My mother cried at
my wedding more out
of relief than any
kind of happiness.

DOESN'T
GILDA LOOK
LOVELY!

THE
PERFECT
BRIDE!

And I was
happy.

I was...





AT SOME POINT, WE NEED TO TALK **BUSINESS**.

SOMETHING BORROWED

And then... things change.

HOW MANY TIMES...



...DO I NEED TO TELL YOU...

Or these men, at some point, they stop hiding.



I DON'T GIVE A #*\$% ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS.

You fade into their background.



A spectator to devastation.



How quickly I gave it up, the children, the family I dreamed of.







BLUE

MARIKO TAMAKI Writer
EMANUELA LUPPACHINO Pencils
WADE VON GRAWBADGER Inks
ARIANA MAHER Letters
DAVE WIELGOSZ Editor

GOIN' TO
THE CHAPEL!



END



2

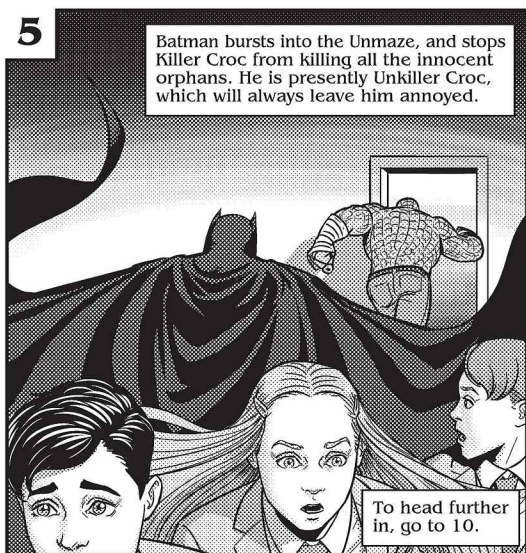
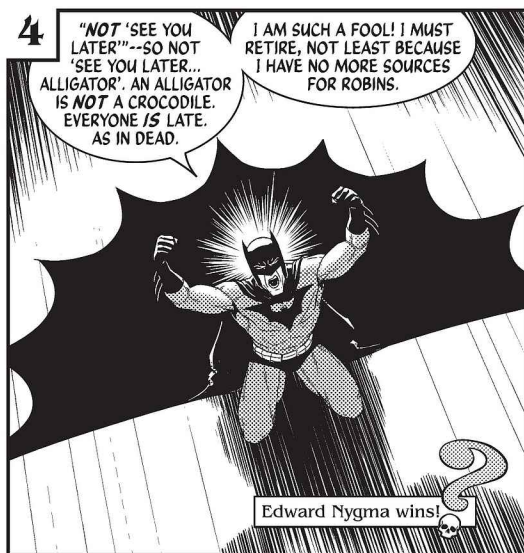
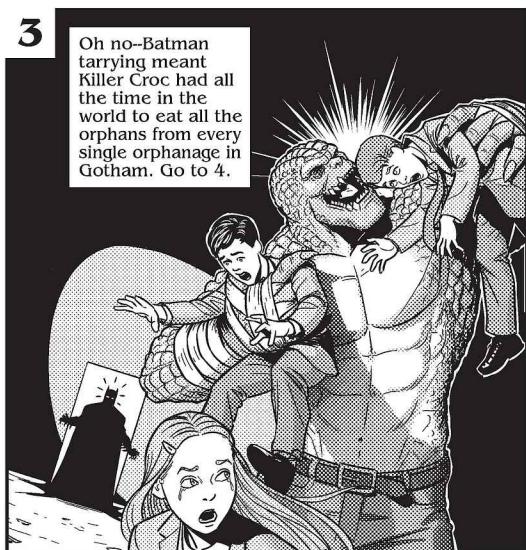
The Riddle

KIERON GILLEN
Writer

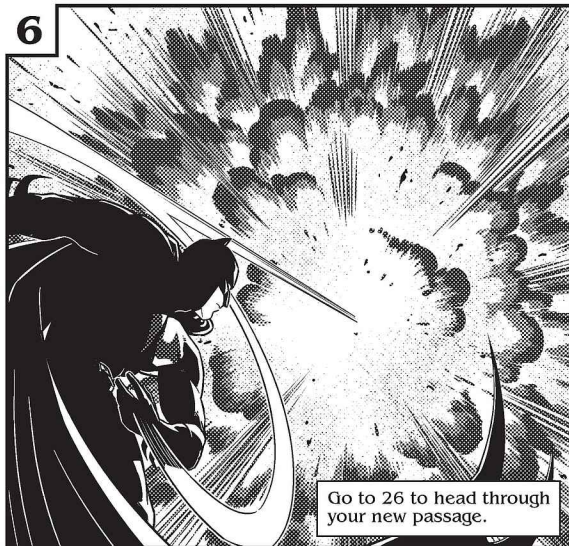
JAMIE McKELVIE
Artist

CLAYTON COWLES
Letters

ANDY KHOURI &
DAVE WIELGOSZ
Editors

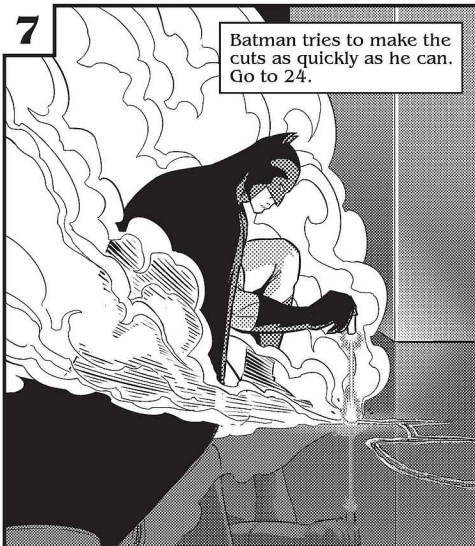


6



Go to 26 to head through your new passage.

7



Batman tries to make the cuts as quickly as he can. Go to 24.

8



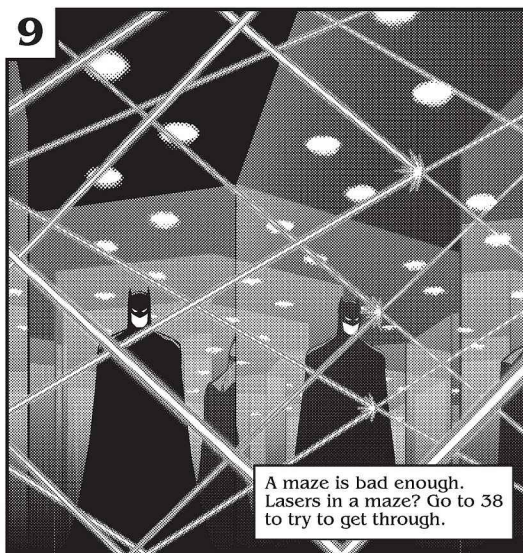
WHAT? WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

DOESN'T MATTER. I'VE STILL GOT PLANS.

Just chase him—Go to 13.

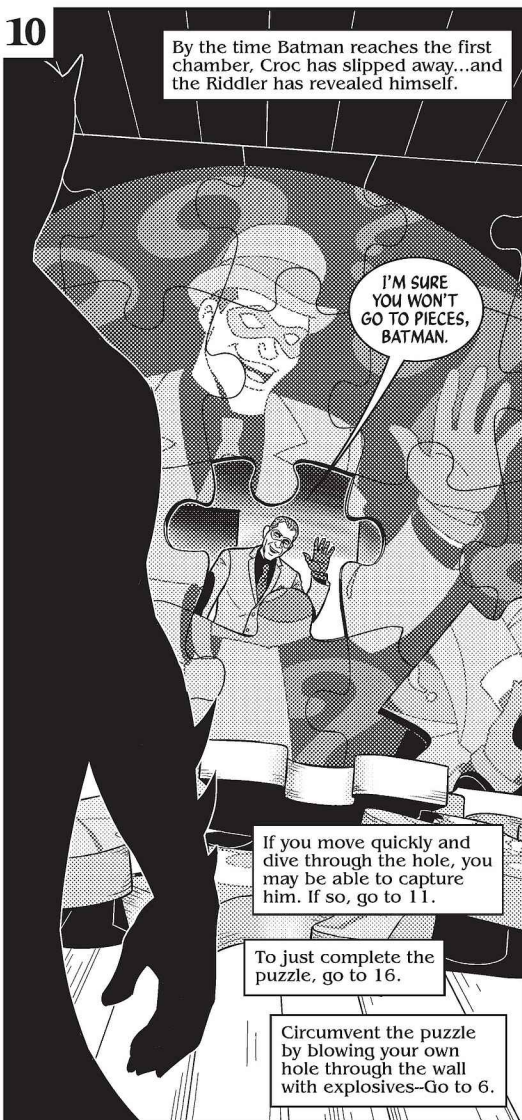
Concentrate and take him down with a batarang!—Go to 17.

9



A maze is bad enough. Lasers in a maze? Go to 38 to try to get through.

10



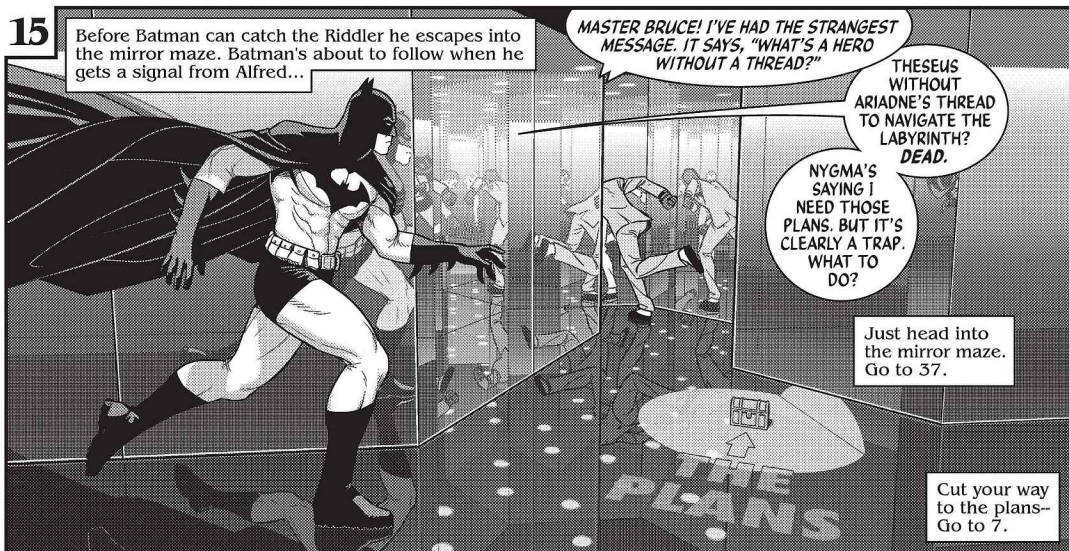
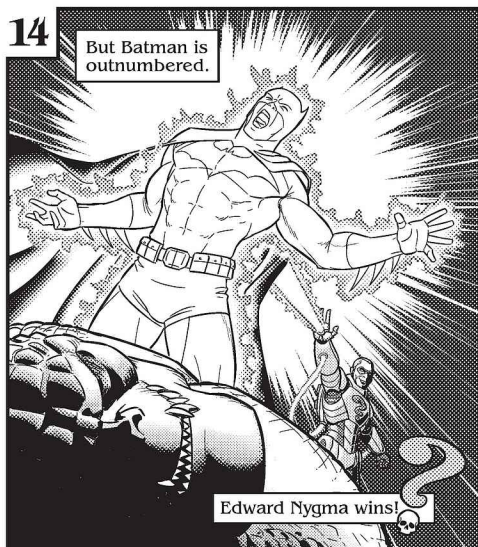
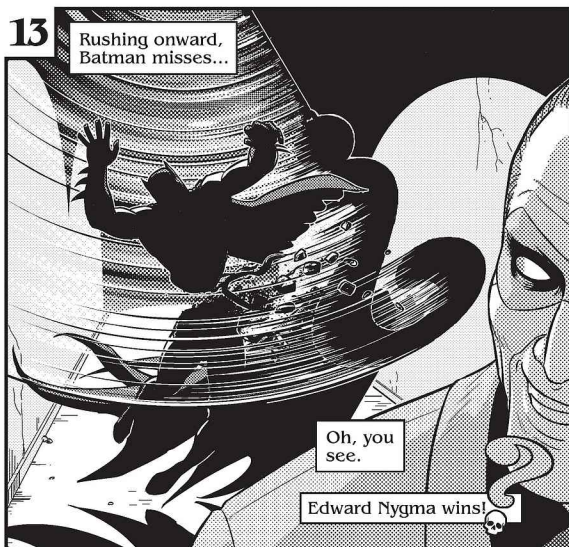
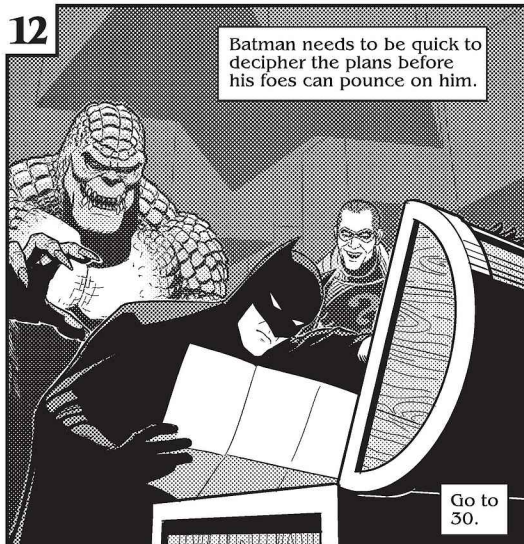
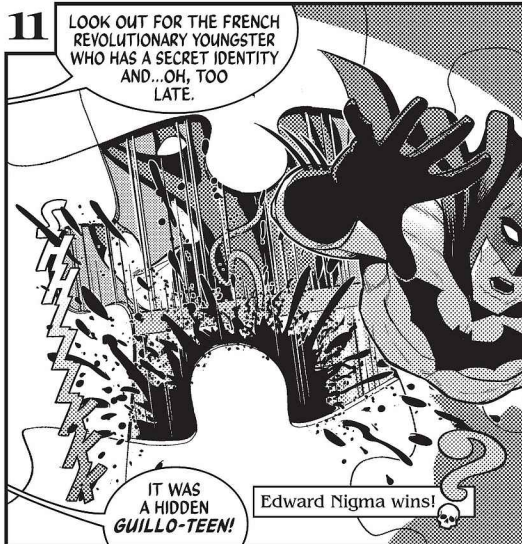
By the time Batman reaches the first chamber, Croc has slipped away...and the Riddler has revealed himself.

I'M SURE YOU WON'T GO TO PIECES, BATMAN.

If you move quickly and dive through the hole, you may be able to capture him. If so, go to 11.

To just complete the puzzle, go to 16.

Circumvent the puzzle by blowing your own hole through the wall with explosives—Go to 6.



16

Batman is the World's Greatest Detective, so identifying the correct piece is hardly a challenge.

Go to 32.

17

As Batman lines up his shot, the creeping Killer Croc is doing likewise.

Edward Nygma wins!

18

The plans are here...but so are Killer Croc and the Riddler. Batman has to prioritize.

To first defeat the Riddler, go to 33.

To first defeat Killer Croc, go to 29.

To first get the plans, go to 12.

19

The Batman is mistaken.

Edward Nygma wins!

20

WHAT, YOU AGAIN?

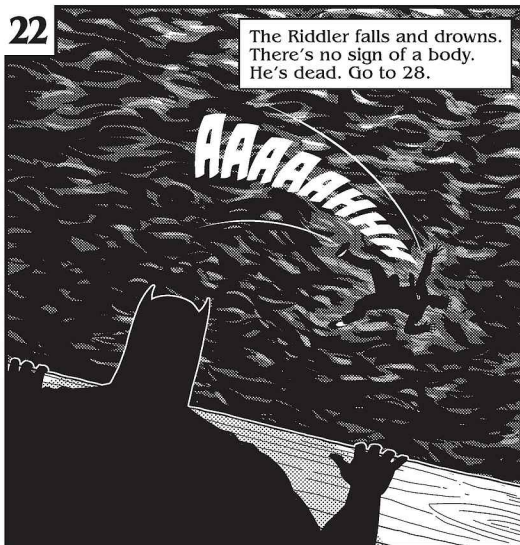
IMPOSSIBLE! BUT I THINK...

21



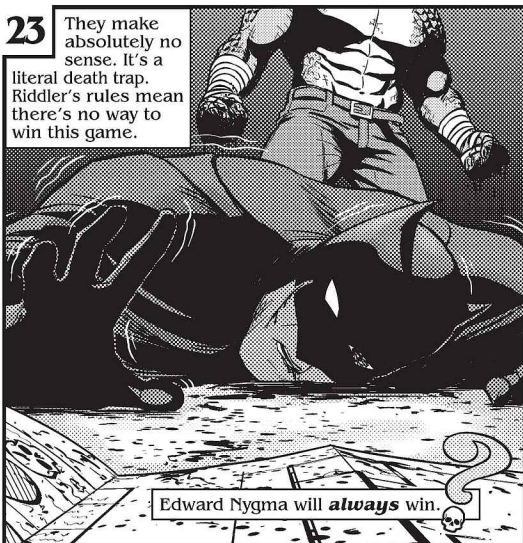
22

The Riddler falls and drowns. There's no sign of a body. He's dead. Go to 28.



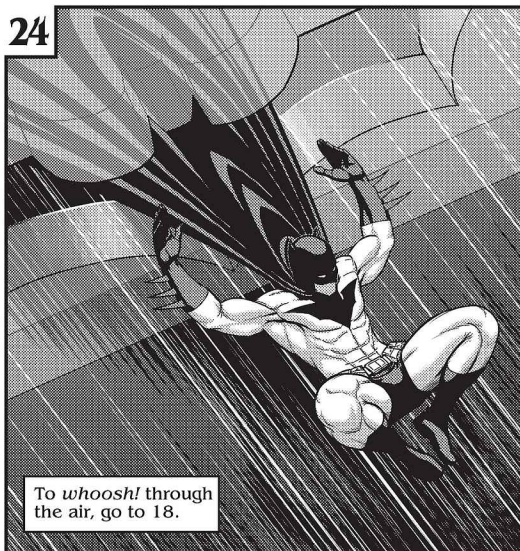
23

They make absolutely no sense. It's a literal death trap. Riddler's rules mean there's no way to win this game.



24

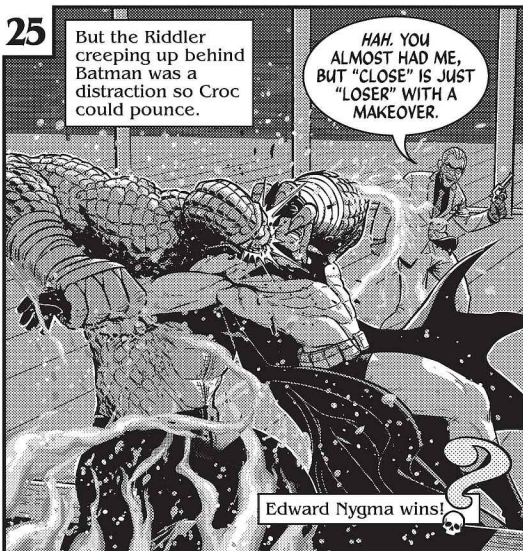
To *whoosh!* through the air, go to 18.



25

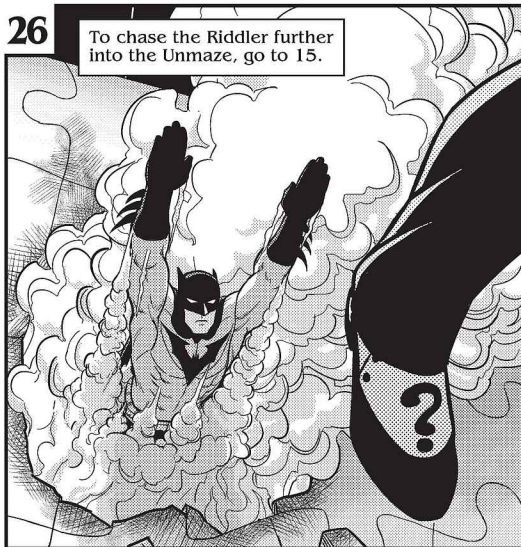
But the Riddler creeping up behind Batman was a distraction so Croc could pounce.

HAH. YOU ALMOST HAD ME, BUT "CLOSE" IS JUST "LOSER" WITH A MAKEOVER.



26

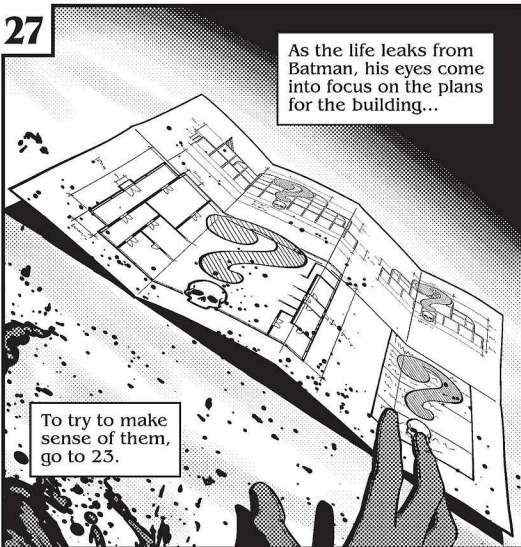
To chase the Riddler further into the Unmaze, go to 15.



27

As the life leaks from Batman, his eyes come into focus on the plans for the building...

To try to make sense of them, go to 25.



28

Alas, the death must have been some kind of decoy, allowing the real E. Nygma to...oh, look at the picture.

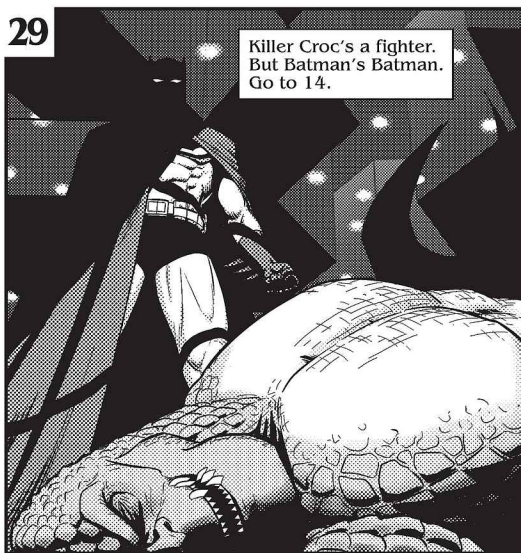
AH--
RIDDLED WITH
BULLETS!



Edward Nygma wins!

29

Killer Croc's a fighter.
But Batman's Batman.
Go to 14.

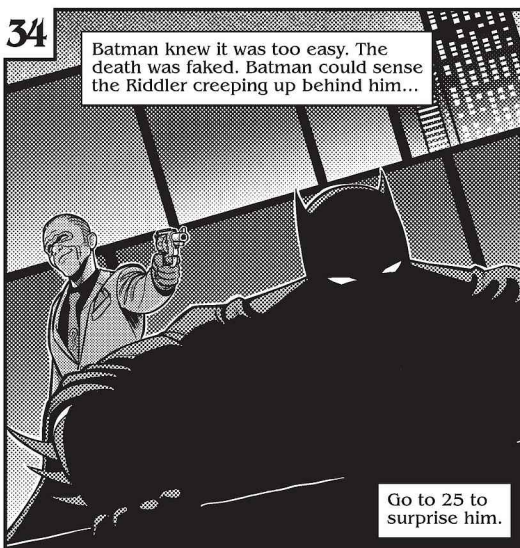
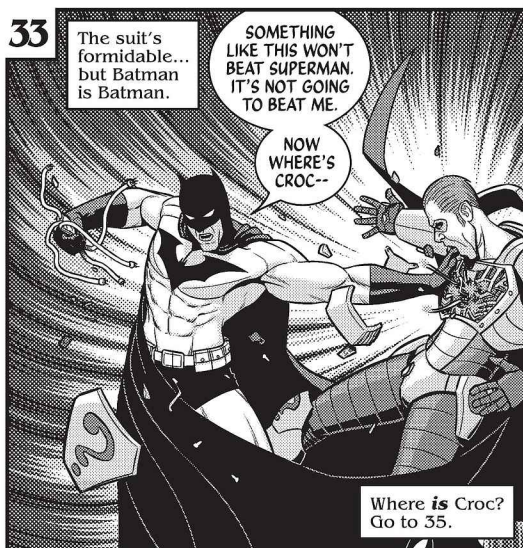
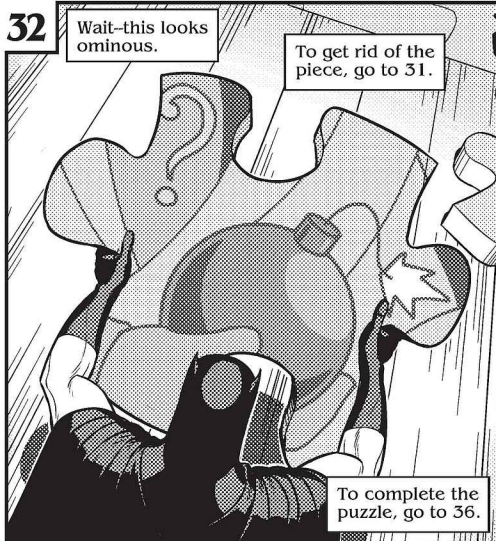
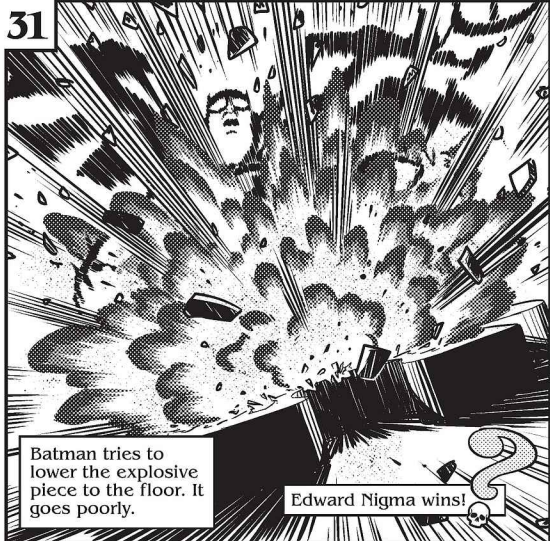


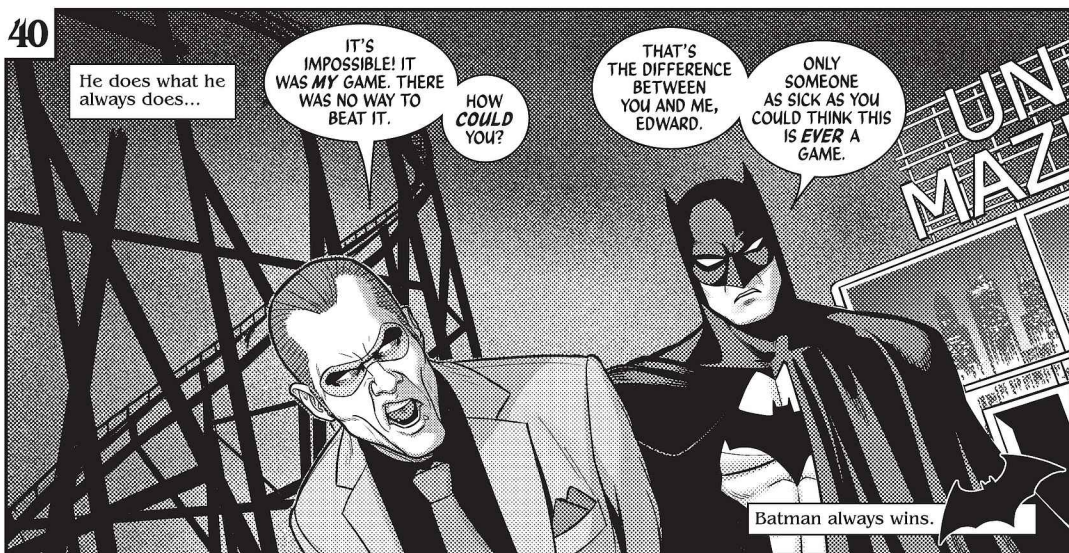
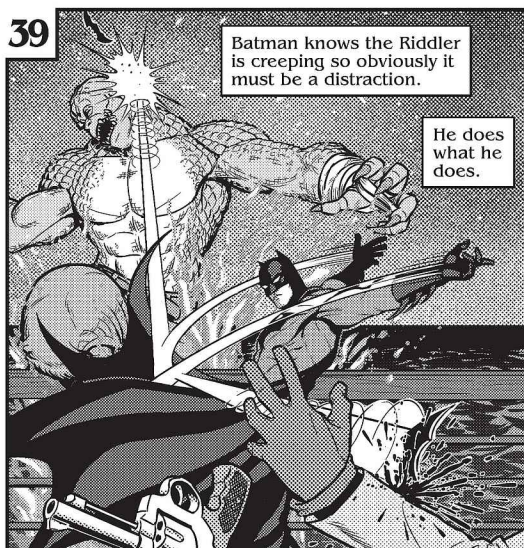
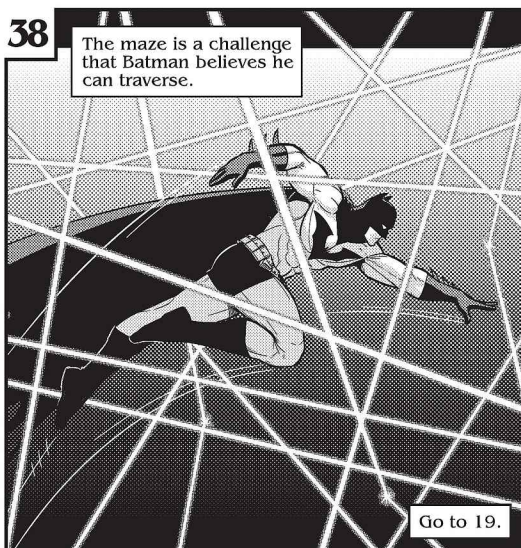
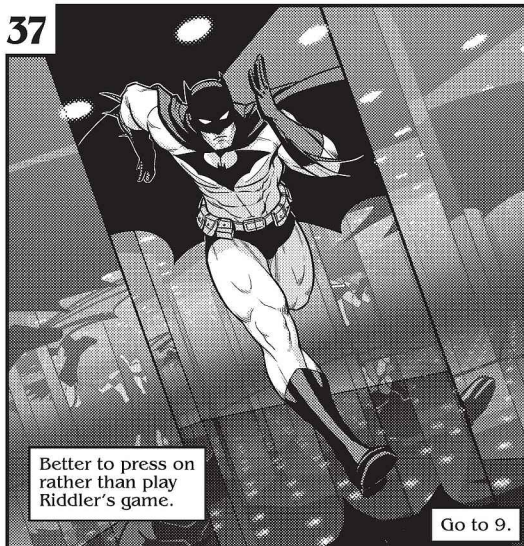
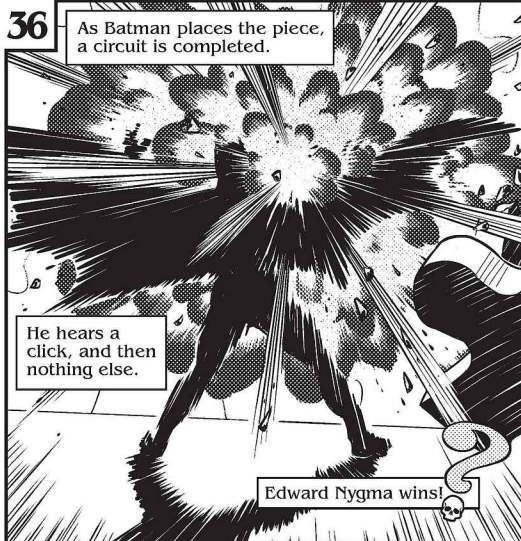
30

He really needed to be quick like the Flash.



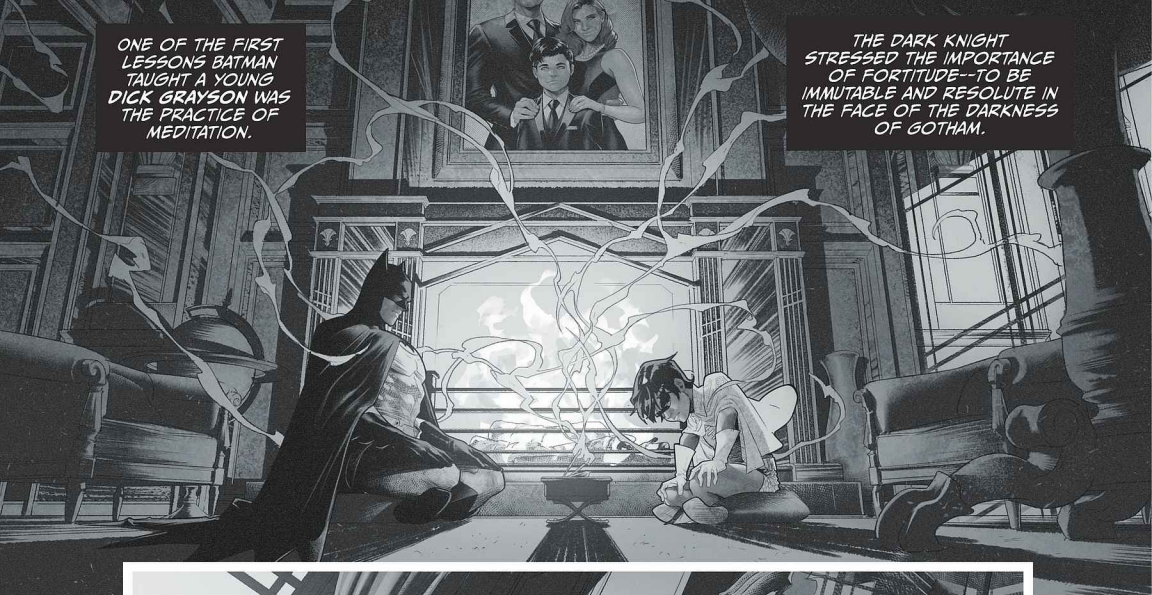
Go to 27.





ONE OF THE FIRST LESSONS BATMAN TAUGHT A YOUNG DICK GRAYSON WAS THE PRACTICE OF MEDITATION.

THE DARK KNIGHT STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF FORTITUDE--TO BE IMMUTABLE AND RESOLUTE IN THE FACE OF THE DARKNESS OF GOTHAM.



AFTER DIFFICULT NIGHTS ON PATROL, THE DUO WOULD PRACTICE STILLNESS FOR HOURS.



AFTER NIGHTS LIKE TONIGHT...



...STILLNESS ISN'T ENOUGH.



HE NEEDS MORE.



HE NEEDS
THIS.



GRAVITY
PULLING HIM INTO
WEIGHTLESSNESS.



CUE THE 5:14
L TRAIN TO GOTHAM
HEIGHTS.



WIND ROARING
INTO SILENCE.



THE MARION
BUILDING
MEGASCREEN.

THE RED WINTER OF BRIDESHEAD
CONTINUES



BREAKING NEWS
FAMILY FOUND DEAD IN BRIDESHEAD APARTMENT
GRISLY REPORTS OF GOTHAM'S MOST BRUTAL MURDER-SUICIDE IN MONTHS

HIS GRAPPLE
HITS ITS MARK.



THE ROUTINE
IS BURNED INTO
HIS MUSCLES.

AND AS HE WEAVES
THROUGH THE VEINS
OF GOTHAM, HIS MIND
PULLS BACK...

...INTO A STREAM
OF WANDERING,
FLEETING
THOUGHTS.

THOUGHTS OF
COMFORT.

FIRST PERFORMANCE!
You ROCKED IT,
LITTLE BIRD!
MOM + DAD

THE APPLAUSE
OF AN ADORING
AUDIENCE.

THE CHAOS
OF A FAMILY
LOVED.

MOVIE NIGHE!!

Happy Anniversary!!!
Forever Overjoyed to have found you!

THE LOVE OF
A LUMINOUS
SOUL.

LOVE OF
UNEQUALLED
BRILLIANCE.

Love You, Boy Wonder!!



THE REGRET
OF A LOVE
BETRAYED.



REGRET
OF LOVE
FAILED.



REGRET
OF FRIENDS
FAILED.



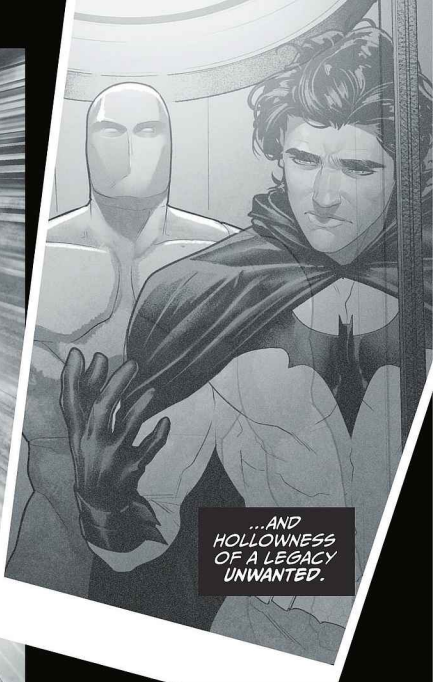
JUST...

...A LOT OF
REGRET.





THE EXPECTATION
OF A LEGACY TO
STRIVE TOWARD...



...AND
HOLLOWNESS
OF A LEGACY
UNWANTED.



THE DARKNESS
OF A CITY
DEVOURING
ITSELF.



THE COST OF
DARKNESS LEFT
UNNOTICED.

A COST
TOO HIGH.



THE CRIES OF
THE HELPLESS
STARVING FOR
HOPE.

AN EMBRACE
OF HOPE TO
TEND FOR THE
STARVING.



A WONDROUS
JOY TO PIERCE
THROUGH ALL
ADVERSITY.

A GUIDING LIGHT
TO INSPIRE THE
BEST IN US ALL.



AND THE
MEMORY OF A
PROMISE...



...TO FLY HIGHER
THAN ANY DARKNESS
CAN REACH.

THE MAN WHO FLIES

story and art by JAMAL CAMPBELL

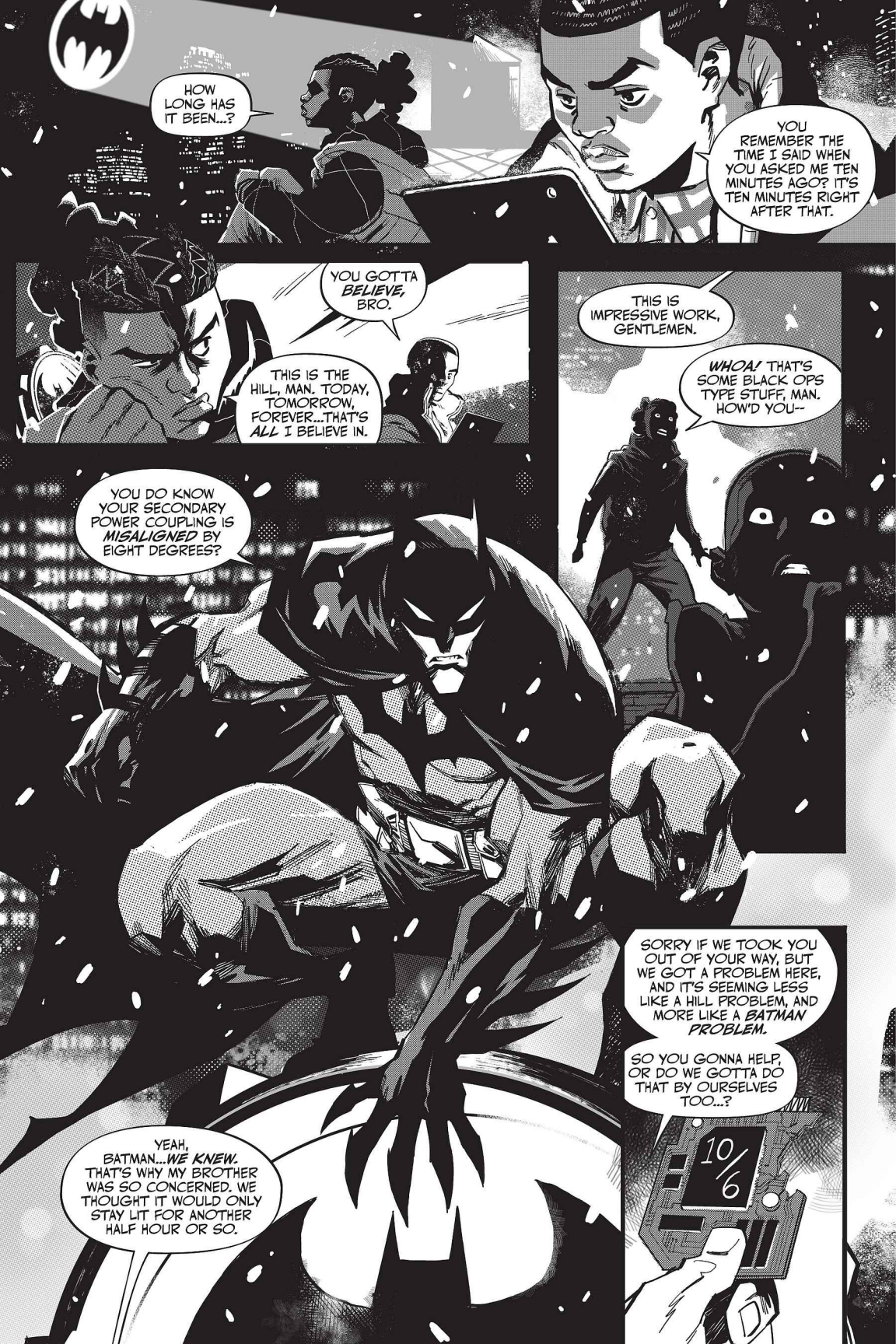
DERON BENNETT letterer ANDY KHOURI editor



THE SECOND SIGNAL

BRANDON THOMAS writer
KHARY RANDOLPH artist
DERON BENNETT letters
DAVE WIELGOSZ &
ANDY KHOURI editors

HILLMAN MAGNET SCHOOL
& TECHNICAL ACADEMY.
THE HILL. GOTHAM.



HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN...?

YOU REMEMBER THE TIME I SAID WHEN YOU ASKED ME TEN MINUTES AGO? IT'S TEN MINUTES RIGHT AFTER THAT.

YOU GOTTA BELIEVE, BRO.

THIS IS THE HILL, MAN. TODAY, TOMORROW, FOREVER...THAT'S ALL I BELIEVE IN.

THIS IS IMPRESSIVE WORK, GENTLEMEN.

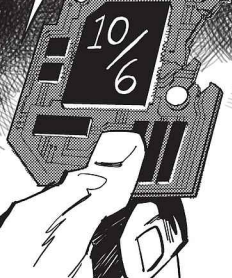
WHOA! THAT'S SOME BLACK OPS TYPE STUFF, MAN. HOW'D YOU--

YOU DO KNOW YOUR SECONDARY POWER COUPLING IS MISALIGNED BY EIGHT DEGREES?

SORRY IF WE TOOK YOU OUT OF YOUR WAY, BUT WE GOT A PROBLEM HERE, AND IT'S SEEMING LESS LIKE A HILL PROBLEM, AND MORE LIKE A BATMAN PROBLEM.

SO YOU GONNA HELP, OR DO WE GOTTA DO THAT BY OURSELVES TOO...?

YEAH, BATMAN...WE KNEW. THAT'S WHY MY BROTHER WAS SO CONCERNED. WE THOUGHT IT WOULD ONLY STAY LIT FOR ANOTHER HALF HOUR OR SO.



TELL ME.

"SOMEBODY'S SNATCHING OUR PEOPLE RIGHT OFF OUR STREETS, AND NOBODY'S DOING ANYTHING!"

"IT'S NOT JUST KIDS OUR AGE EITHER--DON'T THINK WE GOT SOME EPIDEMIC OF MIDDLE-AGED MOMS AND DADS JUST RUNNIN' OFF WITHOUT SAYING NOTHING."

"OUR FAVE TEACHER, MR. MARSHALL, THE MAN WHO TAUGHT US THE THINGS WE NEEDED TO BUILD THIS SIGNAL LIGHT..."

"HE DISAPPEARED LAST WEEK, AND IF YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM, YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT-- IT'S NOT--"

"OUR MAN WAS TAKEN, BATMAN. SOMEBODY TOOK HIM."

"WE RETRACED HIS STEPS, AND FOUND HIM HEADING TO THAT OLD COMMUNITY CENTER ON PARKWAY COURT ALONG WITH--MAN, A LOT OF OTHER PEOPLE. WE CALLED OUT TO HIM, AND HE DIDN'T EVEN TURN OUR WAY!"

"DUDE WAS LIKE HYPNOTIZED. WE FOUND THE CIRCUIT BOARD IN THE PLACE'S DUMPSTER."

"NO TELLING WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE-- STOLEN GOODS, EXPERIMENTS, WE DON'T EVEN KNOW--BUT IT AIN'T GOOD, AND IT AIN'T OUR FAULT--"

NO.

NO, IT'S MINE.

"AND I'LL
TAKE CARE
OF IT."

KR
H
H

TETCH.

BATMAN. FANCY
MEETING YOU HERE.
I'VE BEEN OH SO
CURIOUS HOW MUCH
TIME I HAD.

YOU KNEW
I'D COME,
HATTER.

AHH, BUT IS THAT
TRUE? MY WORK HERE HAS
CONTINUED AT GREAT PACE
FOR WEEKS ON END, AND
I SUSPECTED THAT IT
WOULD ALL ALONG.

IT IS WHY
THE CHOICES
MADE WERE THE
CHOICES MADE,
MY FRIEND.


WE KNOW
PRECISELY WHERE THE
BATMAN GOES, AND WE
KNOW *PRECISELY*
WHERE HE DOES
NOT.

THE
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR MUCH MISCHIEF--
FOR EXPERIMENTATION,
ARE RIFE, BATMAN.
RIFE.

WOULD YOU LIKE
TO KNOW ALL THAT
I'VE DISCOVERED WHILE
YOU'VE BEEN SO VERY
FAR AWAY?

FELLOWS...
SHOW THE CAPED
CRUSADER HOW THE
HATTER MAKES A
MAN'S MIND MINE!

TOODLE-LOO,
BATMAN.

A black and white comic book page featuring Batman. In the top panel, Batman is shown in a dynamic, forward-leaning pose, wearing his iconic suit and mask. He is surrounded by debris and a large, dark, shadowy figure. A speech bubble from Batman is in the top left. In the middle panel, Batman is shown in a similar pose, with a speech bubble in the center. In the bottom left panel, a close-up of a man's face is shown, looking shocked and holding his hand to his mouth. A speech bubble from him is in the top left of this panel. In the bottom right panel, Batman is shown in a dynamic pose, with a speech bubble in the center. The page is filled with action lines and dramatic lighting.

I'M NOT GOING
TO HURT YOU. THE
CRIMES HE FORCED
YOU TO COMMIT
WERE **NOT** YOUR
FAULT.

THIS WILL
NEVER HAPPEN
AGAIN.

PAFF

WHOOOSH

UNNGH—
WHERE—WHERE
AM I...?

IT WAS
THE MAD
HATTER.

AND HE'S
GETTING
AWAY.



PANT...
PANT...
PANT...

HEY.

MR.
HAT.

THE
HILL'S GOT
A MESSAGE
FOR YOU.

YEAH, MAN, WE
DON'T WANT TO
SEE YOU DOWN
HERE ANYMORE.
NOT FOR
NOTHING.

WE'RE TALKING
ABOUT FOREVER,
MR. HAT.

FOREVER
EVER.

"OR IT WON'T
JUST BE THE BAT
YOU'VE GOTTA
WORRY ABOUT..."



"OVER HERE,
MAN!"

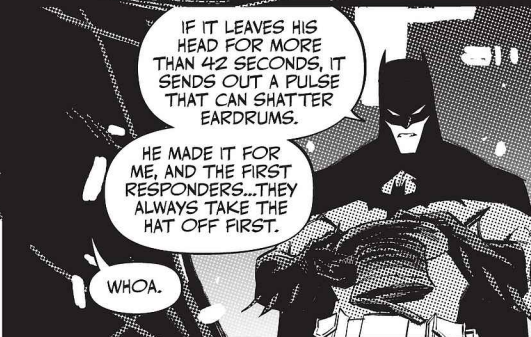
"THIS ONE IS
DONE!"

"ALREADY!"



YOUR TEACHER AND
THE OTHERS WILL
BE FINE--EVERYTHING
TAKEN GOES
BACK.

CAREFUL
WITH THE
HAT.



IF IT LEAVES HIS
HEAD FOR MORE
THAN 42 SECONDS, IT
SENDS OUT A PULSE
THAT CAN SHATTER
EARDRUMS.

HE MADE IT FOR
ME, AND THE FIRST
RESPONDERS...THEY
ALWAYS TAKE THE
HAT OFF FIRST.

WHOA.

THAT'S
SO MESSED
UP. YOU GOT
SOME MINIATURIZED
SOUND BAFFLES IN
YOUR COWL?



THAT'S
VERY GOOD,
MICHAEL. POLICE
ARE ON THEIR
WAY NOW.

MAN,
YOU *SURE*
ABOUT
THAT...?

I'LL
MAKE SURE.
TONIGHT, AND
THE ONES
AFTER.



RIGHT ON,
AND YOU KNOW--
YOU NEED ANY NEW
ROBINS ON THE
HILL, YOU KNOW
WHERE TO FIND A
COUPLE...

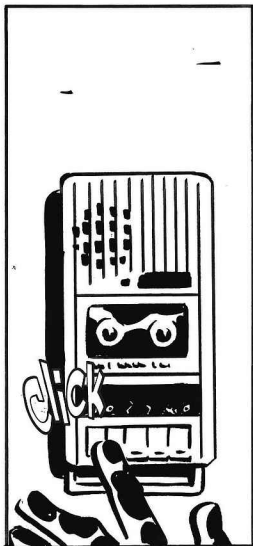


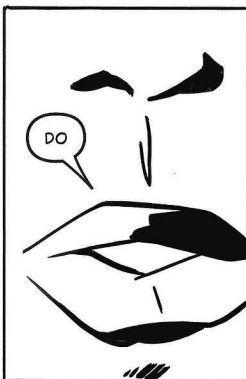
MAAAN...

I KNOW!
I KNOW!

WE
BUILD THAT
NEXT!

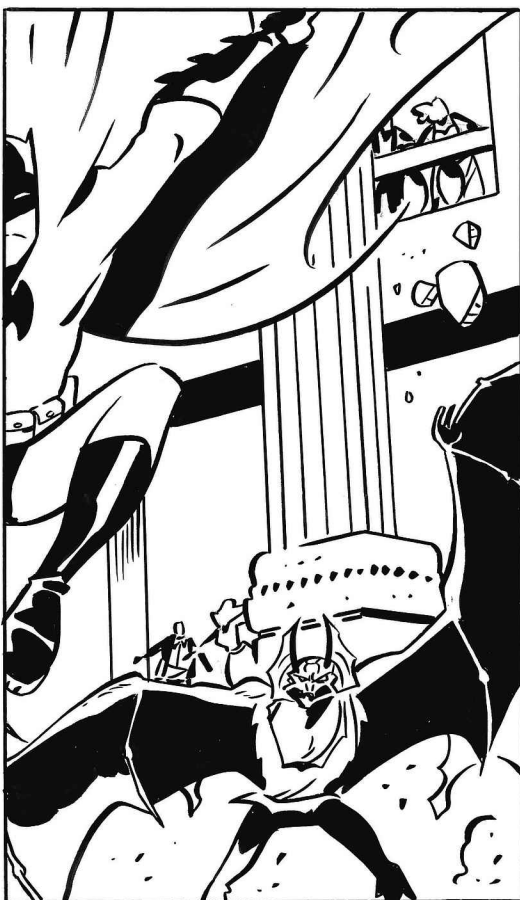
END





THE ABYSS

WRITERS PIERRICK COLINET &
ELSA CHARRETIER
ARTIST ELSA CHARRETIER
LETTERS ARIANA MAHER
EDITORS ANDY KHOURI &
DAVE WIELGOSZ













WHAT WE
ARE DEALING WITH
HERE IS SOME SORT
OF **COGNITIVE
DISTORTION**.

AN
IRRATIONAL
THOUGHT
PATTERN.



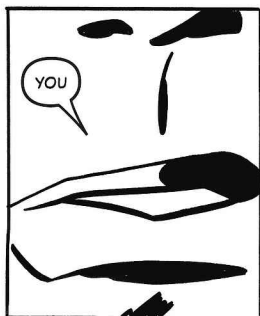
YOUR
MEMORIES, YOUR
REALITIES, ARE...
TAINTED.



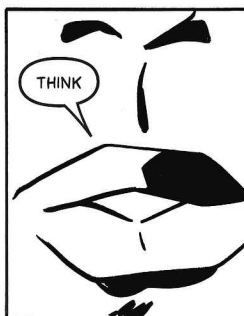
THAT'S THE
DOUBLE-EDGED
SWORD OF BATMAN'S...
APPROACH TO CRIME-
FIGHTING.

INSPIRING
FEAR PREVENTS
RATIONAL
THINKING.

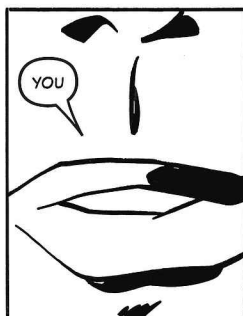
SO
MUCH SO
THAT...



YOU



THINK



YOU



SAW...



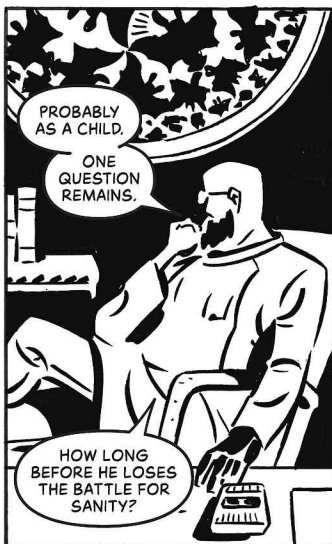
A SAVIOR.



A MAD-
MAN.



A MONSTER!





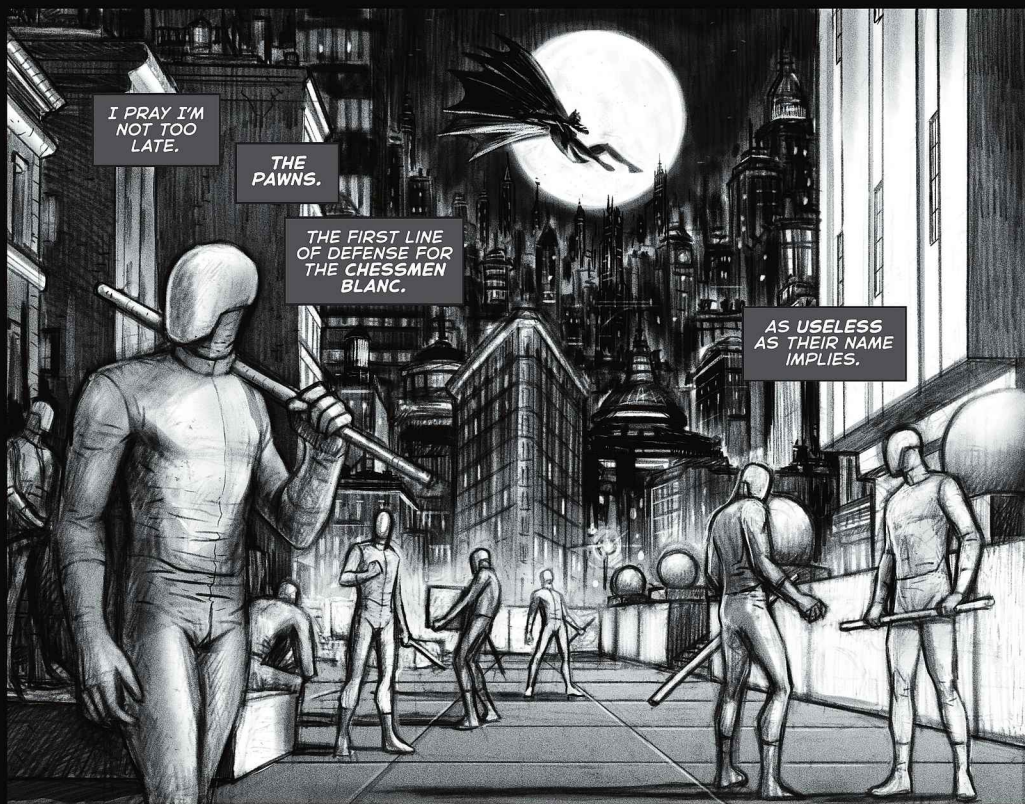
BATMAN

OPENING MOVES

by Nick Derington

Steve Wands Lettering

Ben Abernathy & Dave Wielgosz Editors















THE
CHESSMEN
NOIR.

THEY HAVE
COME FOR
THEIR STOLEN
PRINCE...



...AND FOR
REVENGE.



A BLOODBATH
ENSUES...



QUICK.
THIS WAY!



IF WE CAN MAKE
IT TO THE SIDE
WINDOW, WE'RE
FREE.

ALMOST
THERE...

SLIK

GAH!

THUMP

NNN!

HUFF...
HUFF...

COUGH...
WAIT...

THE
BOY...

I...

YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO DO
THIS.

YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO BE LIKE
THEM.

I'M
TOO
LATE.

THE ENDGAME

FOR WEEKS NOW,
YOUNG GIRLS HAVE
BEEN DISAPPEARING
OFF THE STREETS.

A NEW PLAGUE TO THIS
CITY, BUT STRUGGLE IS
FAMILIAR IN GOTHAM.

LIKE MONSTERS OF THE DEEP

JOHN ARCUDI WRITER JAMES HARREN ARTIST

TOM NAPOLITANO LETTERS

BEN ABERNATHY & DAVE WIELGOSZ EDITORS

THE FEAR IS FAMILIAR ALSO
IN THIS DARK CAPITAL.

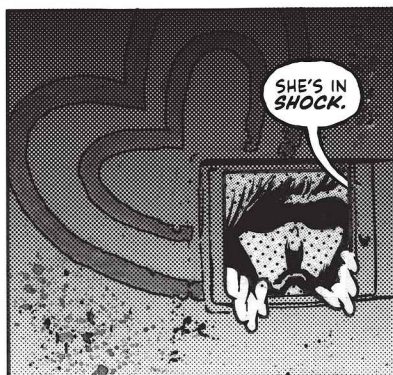
AS FAMILIAR AS
THE CREATURE
THAT WATCHES
FROM ABOVE.

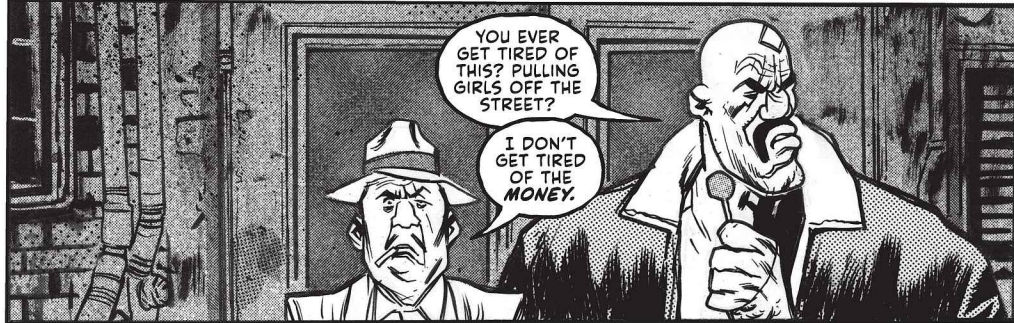
WATCHES,
AND DOES...

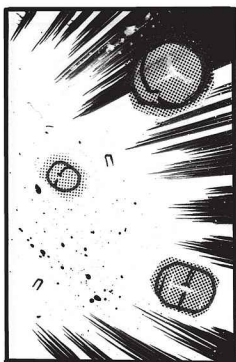
NOTHING.

GOT A
LIVE ONE
HERE.

NO
NEED TO BE
CRUDE, KARL.
HONEY, NOT
VINEGAR.





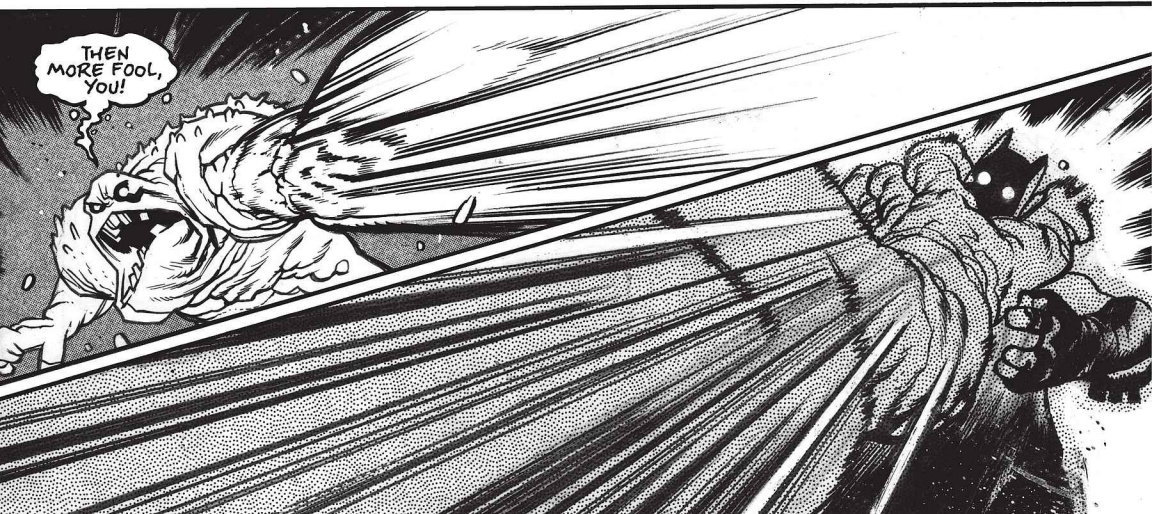


DAMMIT, KARLO, YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO LOCATE THE GIRLS AND FREE THEM, GET THEM OUT OF HARM'S WAY.

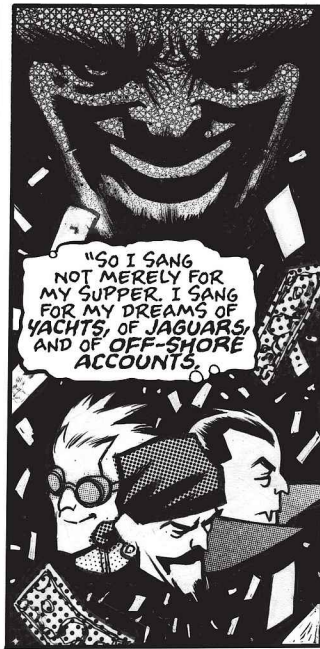
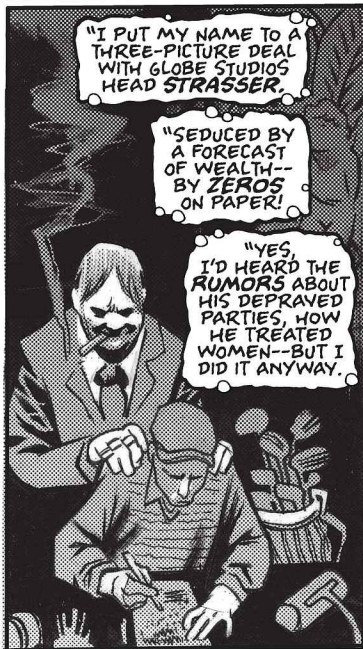
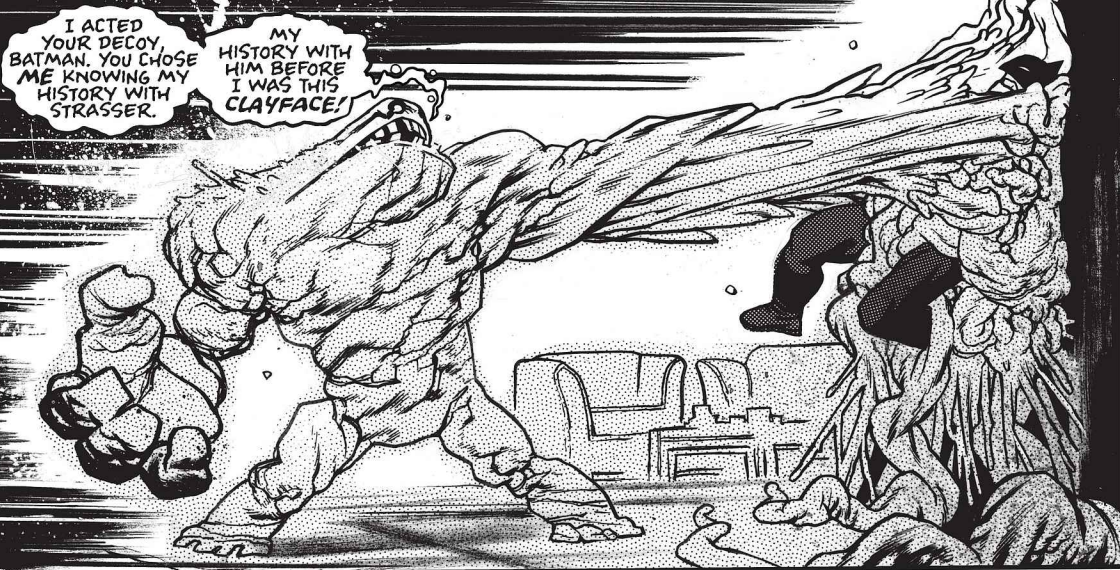


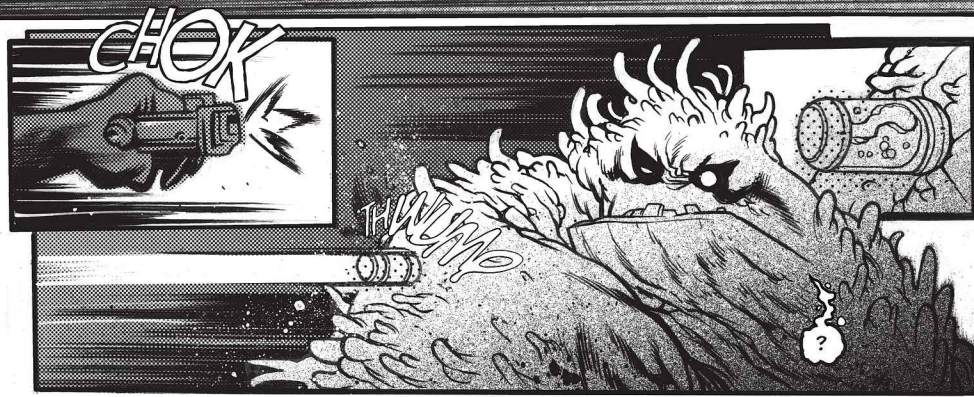
THAT'S IT!

THOSE WERE THE TERMS OF YOUR RELEASE FROM ARKHAM! I THOUGHT YOU UNDERSTOOD THAT.



THEN MORE FOOL, YOU!



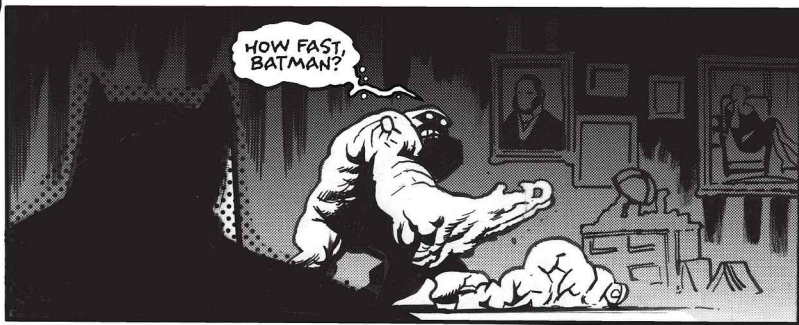


DID YOU
THINK I'D COME
UNPREPARED,
KARLO?!

A FAST-
ACTING
CHEMICAL
HARDENING
AGENT.



HOW FAST,
BATMAN?



I WILL
HAVE SUCH
REVENGES
ON YOU
BOTH.



HAD THY
BRETHREN
HERE--



--THEIR
LIVES AND
THINE--



--WERE
NOT REVENGE
SUFFICIENT
FOR ME.



THEN KILL,
KILL, KILL,
KILL, KILL



KILL...





OH,
THANK GOD!
THANK GOD
YOU CAME,
BATMAN.

WHAT GOD
DO YOU THINK
HEARS YOU,
STRASSER?



THESE MONTHS OF
ABDUCTIONS, FINALLY
OVER. ALL THESE POOR
GIRLS FREE FROM YOU
AND YOUR VILE
"COLLEAGUES."

IF
ANY PRAYERS
WERE ANSWERED
TONIGHT, THEY
WEREN'T
YOURS.



YES, I BELONG IN
PRISON! ABSOLUTELY.
BUT NOT LIKE *THIS!*
TRAPPED INSIDE
THIS...THING.

YOU MUST
BREAK ME
FREE!



THE
POLICE WILL
BE HERE
SOON.



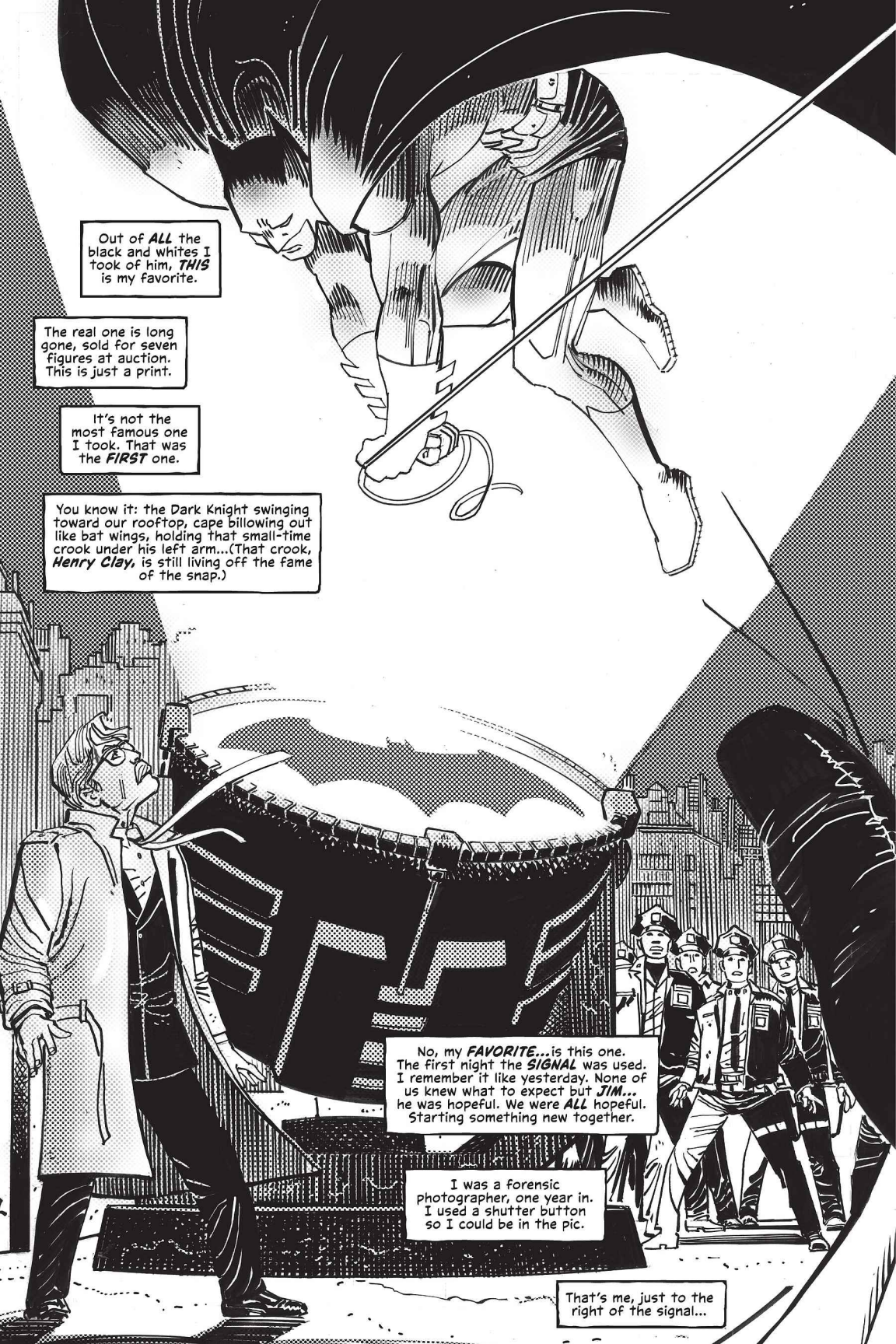
AND I
CALLED THE FIRE
DEPARTMENT.



MAYBE
THEY'LL
BRING AN
AX.



END



Out of **ALL** the black and whites I took of him, **THIS** is my favorite.

The real one is long gone, sold for seven figures at auction. This is just a print.

It's not the most famous one I took. That was the **FIRST** one.

You know it: the Dark Knight swinging toward our rooftop, cape billowing out like bat wings, holding that small-time crook under his left arm...(That crook, **Henry Clay**, is still living off the fame of the snap.)



No, my **FAVORITE**...is this one. The first night the **SIGNAL** was used. I remember it like yesterday. None of us knew what to expect but **JIM**... he was hopeful. We were **ALL** hopeful. Starting something new together.

I was a forensic photographer, one year in. I used a shutter button so I could be in the pic.

That's me, just to the right of the signal...

...and this is me tonight.

I didn't last long in forensics. A year in and there was this Joker attack on a kids' hospital and....and that was all she wrote for me and crime scene.

Jim being Jim, he let me stay on, work as the GCPD's bat-photog for a while, until I got set up as a *photojournalist*.

He called me the *shutterbat*. And that became my thing, taking pictures of Batman.

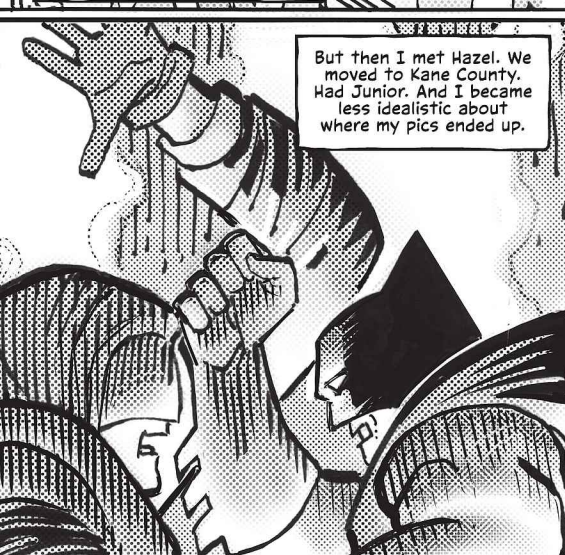




I may have taken more pictures of him than anyone. I'm not sure. But if you read the *Gotham papers*, you've seen my work.



Over the years I've sold shots of Batman to every paper in the city. My favorite is the *Gazette*, as they do the least tailoring. The first few years, I **ONLY** sold to them.



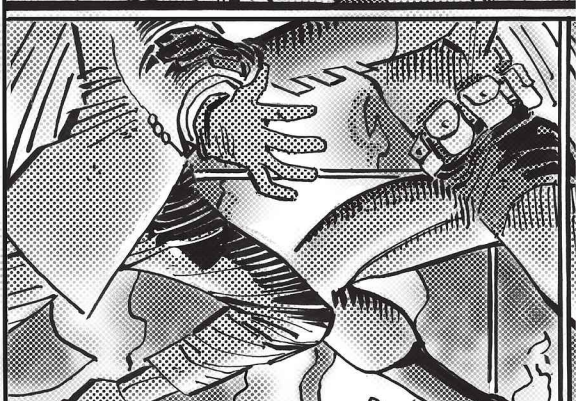
But then I met Hazel. We moved to Kane County. Had Junior. And I became less idealistic about where my pics ended up.



The *Herald* paid the most, but was the worst. They'd darken my work so much I barely recognized it. Always screaming about "Batman the villain."



On the other hand, the *Weekly* heroized him. Made my pics angelic.

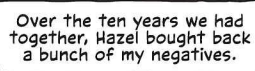


Sometimes I'd even sell to the *Caves*, the underground zine, all conspiracies about him, who he is.



I told myself, "I took the real picture. Whatever it becomes...out of my hands."

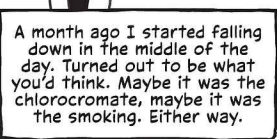
But it's amazing how **ONE** image can take on so many different meanings, often at odds with each other.



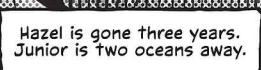
Over the ten years we had together, Hazel bought back a bunch of my negatives.




I've been thinking about that a lot lately, contradictions. Different ways of seeing.



A month ago I started falling down in the middle of the day. Turned out to be what you'd think. Maybe it was the chlorocromate, maybe it was the smoking. Either way.



Hazel is gone three years. Junior is two oceans away.



And during the past weeks,
I've been looking back at my
life's work, reconsidering.

I thought they were objective but
now they all seem charged with mixed
meanings. I can't see them clearly,
free of how they were presented.

Admiration,
accusation...I can't
tell what they mean
anymore. What any
of it means.

I tried to be a good husband. A good
father. But all these moments, colored
differently by time...how do they add
up? What do I look like? Really?

They're doing a retrospective of my
work. Shutterbat. Before I kick it.



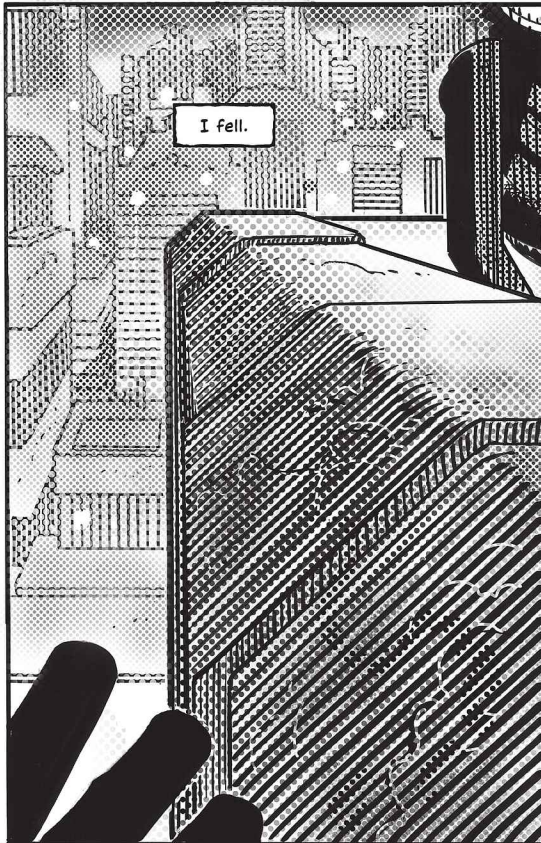
Which is why I came
back *HERE* tonight.

To find out.

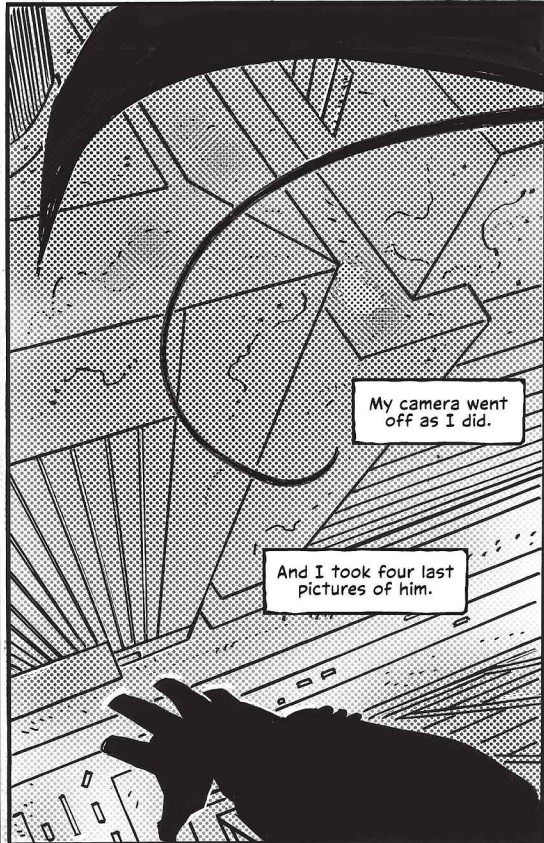
To ask him, which ones are you?
How do you see yourself? You who
I've taken thousands of pictures
of. What would *YOUR* choice be?

There's a fireworks display
going off right now, to honor
the city's tercentenary, so I
don't feel so bad about pulling
Batman away for a moment.

But see, I screwed
up. The exertion of
climbing the steps,
the light, the heat...



I fell.



My camera went
off as I did.

And I took four last
pictures of him.



As he caught me I
tried to ask, how
do *YOU* see it all?



Your life, your work, if
you had to sum it up in one
image, what would it be? But
I never got the words out.

When I woke up, I
was back in my bed.

My camera
beside me.

And *THIS* is
what I saw.

My picture. The original.
How he got it from the
Waynes, I don't know,
but there it was, with a
certificate of ownership,
given to me.

I like to think that this
was his answer. Not just
for him, but for me.

Because despite it all,
even after all these
years, all the horrors,
the disappointments,
the mistakes, that's
the picture. It *HAS* to
be. For him, yes, but
for me too.

And for
all of us.

Standing there at
our most hopeful,
trying something
bold together. Every
night a chance to
see it all anew.

A THOUSAND WORDS

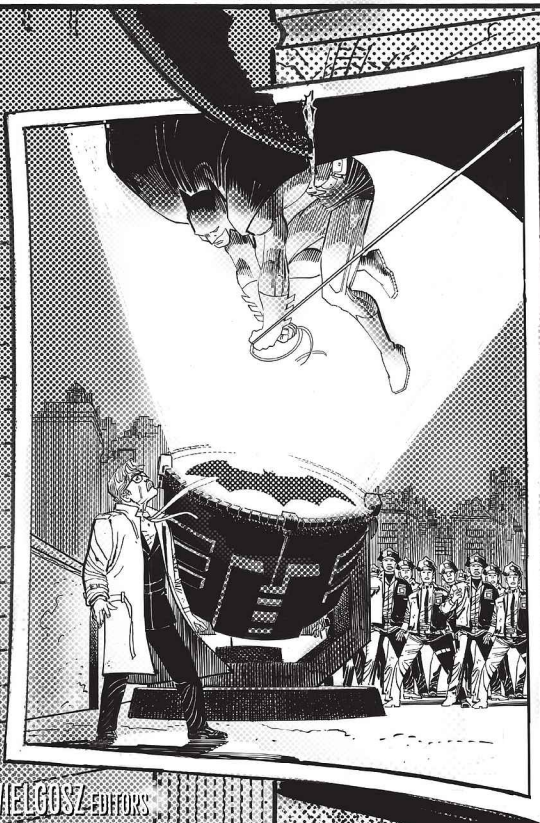
SCOTT SNYDER WRITER

JOHN ROMITA JR. PENCILS

KLAUS JANSON INKS

TOM NAPOLITANO LETTERS

BEN ABERNATHY & DAVE WIELGOSZ EDITORS



END.



Kyle Hotz
V4H1

BATMAN BLACK & WHITE #1
RETAILER VARIANT COVER BY KYLE HOTZ



Tony
Daniel
2000

THE CELEBRATED ANTHOLOGY SERIES RETURNS!

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JONES



KARL
KERSCHL



TOM
KING



ARIELA
KRISTANTINA



ANDY
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EMANUELA
LUPACCHINO



JAMIE
MCKELVIE



JESÚS
MERINO



TRADD
MOORE



KHARY
RANDOLPH



AMY
REEDER



JOHN
RIDLEY



EMMA
RIOS



JOHN
ROMITA JR.



RILEY
ROSSMO



TIM
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GREG
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DEXTER
SOY



JAMES
STOKOE



MARIKO
TAMAKI



BABS
TARR



BRANDON
THOMAS



ANDIE
TONG



JAMES
TYNION IV



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VILLALOBOS



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WEAVER



LEE
WEEKS



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WILLIAMS III



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CHIP
ZDARSKY



WITH TALENT
OF THIS CALIBER,



THERE ARE NO
GRAY AREAS.